

# History of Vaishnavism in South India upto Ramanuja

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# HISTORY OF VAISHNAVISM IN SOUTH INDIA UPTO RAMANUJA

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## *PREFACE*

THE history of Vaiṣṇavism in South India presented in this thesis covers the period from the earliest times up to Rāmānuja. For the purpose of the thesis South India has been delimited to mean the Tamil country for the main reason that during this period of Pre-Rāmānuja Vaiṣṇavism the main currents of its history flowed in this region.

A generation of scholars beginning from the twenties of this century have written sketches and monographs on the different periods and phases of its history. But this is the first attempt to present a connected account of its history; And it is hoped that this will suggest the lines on which the subsequent phases of its development during the early philosophical and organisational phase of unity and the subsequent schismatic period of decline may be dealt with on similar lines.

The sources of the first formative period being mainly traditional, the literature embodying tradition and its interpretation on sound lines for the purpose of history required a critical examination of the traditional literature involving detailed textual criticism. The first part of the work, therefore, is a critique of the sources which may be considered in itself a distinct contribution to the subject. Except for Prapannāmṛtam which has been noticed by Dr. S. K. Ayyangar, the other source works have not been critically examined so far. Even the



notice of the *Prapannāmṛtam* was in respect of Vijayanagar History and not at all in relation to its main theme namely the history of the Āḷvārs and Ācāryās. This has involved the collection of MSS from different sources and the printed editions of both the *Ārāyirappaḍi Guruparamparā Prabhāvam* and the *Divyasūri Caritam* for ascertaining the soundness of the tests to be relied upon as sources for our purpose. Such critical study of the sources has focussed attention on an important aspects of chronology namely the date of the *Divyasūri Caritam*. It has been shown, contrary to the accepted and persisting opinion, that the author of that *Kāvya* was not a contemporary of Rāmānuja but a late writer of the 15th century and that it is a close adoption of the much earlier *Ārāyirappaḍi Guruparamparā Prabhāvam* of Pinpaḷagiya Jiyar. Conclusions based on the contemporaneity of the author of the *Kāvya* with Rāmānuja and its authoritative nature based on this belief will have to be revised.

In the second part dealing with the history of Pre-Rāmānuja Vaiṣṇavism the existing literature on the subject has been reviewed in the light of the conclusions arrived at in the first part regarding the nature of the source work to be relied upon for the study. Wherever necessary, modifications of existing views have been suggested. Evidences from literary sources hitherto touched upon have been given on the much debated problem of the location of the birth place of Kula-Sekhara Āḷvār and Vañci the capital of the Cēras. It is hoped that it may throw fresh light on the subject.

In respect of the chronology of the age of the Ālvārs, it has been shown that it would be safe to rely on internal evidence relating to the place of their works in the development of Tamil literature, as the most important if not the only source for chronology. This may be mentioned as a feature of the second part of the thesis in respect of the methods employed in dealing with the subject.

The foot notes given will show my indebtedness in a large measure to all the pioneers in this field of research. I must also express my deep gratitude to Professor R. Satyanatha Iyer, to whose valuable guidance, I owe the successful completion of this work.

*B. V. Ramanujam*

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# PART I.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

As distinct from, though not necessarily opposed to the Carlylean concept of history as a biography of great men, the more accepted view of history is that which conceives it as a series of human movements influencing the march of civilization among men. Viewed in this light, the concept of general Indian History has to be widened so as to include within its scope a proper perspective of South Indian History because of its significant contributions to the general Indian Culture. This was naturally the special concern of South Indian Historians, which egged them on to fruitful efforts in that direction. As we all know, it has produced excellent results in books on general Indian History by Professor R. Satyanatha Iyer and Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri in recent years not to speak of similar work by Prof. P. T. Srinivasa Aiyangar in an earlier generation.

For much the same reason, the need was felt ever since the beginning of this century for a comprehensive history of South India as distinct from general Indian History. In the first place, there was and there is still

the need for the 'disentanglement' of the Āryan and Pre-Āryan elements for a proper appraisal of the essential ingredients of the composite culture of India. As has been rightly observed, "the history of South India is an integral and not the least interesting part of the History of India.....All over India, the foundations of Indian culture were laid by the fusion of Indo-Āryan and pre-Āryan elements in varying conditions and proportions and in the languages, literatures and institutions of the South, there has survived much more of pre-Āryan India than anywhere else"<sup>1</sup>. The value and significance of South Indian history can be emphasised further with the following words of the late Prof. Dāmōdaram Pillai. ".....The process of Āryanisation has gone indeed too far to leave it easy for the historian to distinguish the native warp from the foreign woof. But if there is anywhere any chance of such successful disentanglement, it is in the South ; and the farther we go, the larger does the chance grow."<sup>2</sup> We need hardly add that a separate cultural and religious history of South India is necessary especially in view of the large mass of confused, if not altogether misguided thinking about the relative importance of these two cultures in the general texture of the seamless garment of Indian culture and civilisation. Here again, we are happy that the need for such South Indian History has been adequately met by the works of the late Prof. P. T. Srinivasa Aiyangar (History of the Tamils) and in recent years by "a History of South India" by Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri.

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1. Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri — A History of South India, Chapter I, p. 2.

2. Ibid, Chap. I, p. 12.

Regarding the need for specialised histories of the religions of South India, it is enough to point out that though all the religions, namely, Buddhism, Jainism, Vaiṣṇavism, and Saivism had their origin in North India, they came into contact with the virile pre-Āryan cultural background of the South and developed in such a way as to make significant contributions to the further development of their religion and philosophy of their own. It is, therefore, necessary to turn our attention to the writing of the religious history of South India in respect of all the religions that flourished there.

Thus, the need for a systematic study of Vaiṣṇavism in South India becomes apparent. No such history has been written so far, though several monographs have been written on the different phases of its history by different scholars during the last 30 to 40 years; and thanks to their labours, we have considerable valuable literature to go upon for a connected account of South Indian Vaiṣṇavism.

The History of Vaiṣṇavism in South India falls naturally into three divisions. The first covering the period from the earliest times upto Rāmānuja (1017-1137) would deal with the origin of Vaiṣṇavism, the age of the Ālvārs, and the age of the Ācāryās from Nāthamuni to Rāmānuja. The second division covering a period of nearly 3 centuries—the 11th, 12th and 13th from Rāmānuja to Piṭṭailōkācārya and Venkaṭanātha (1268-1370) may be described as the period of the unity of Vaiṣṇavism. The third and last division comprising the period after the 13th century may be described as the schismatic and therefore, the least creative period of its history.

An attempt will be made in the following chapters to present the History of Vaiṣṇavism in South India in the first formative period i.e, from the earliest times upto Rāmānuja with the aid of the available sources.

**SOURCES :—** (i) *Archæology*.

Archæology is the hand-maid of history. While that part of the science which deals with temples and other monuments, is valuable for the study of the development of art, in general, it would also serve to indicate at least the broad outlines of the religious history of a people. But, in the absence of a systematic survey and a description of monuments either by the archæological department or by scholars interested in the subject. Archæology in South India at any rate, cannot be considered to be a fruitful source of religious history.

(ii) *Epigraphy* :— ‘Inscriptions’.

Epigraphy, however, has made such remarkable progress in South India during the last half a century as to enable several scholars to reconstruct the political and cultural history of South India in general and several dynasties in particular more fully than ever before. Even in the comparatively restricted sphere of purely religious history, inscriptions provide valuable material for the historian. But as they relate mostly to the period commencing from about the 10th century A. D., they cannot be of help for the study of history before that period. This early period of the History of Vaiṣṇavism in South India, corresponding to what may be called the “Hymnist” period or the Age of the Ālvars may be said to have extended from the 5th century A. D. to about



the close of the 9th century A. D. and we have very sparse inscriptional material on which to build the chronology of the period or to fix precisely the dates of the Ālvārs and Nāyanmārs who have contributed richly to the religion and philosophy of Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism in South India. However, we come across several inscriptions relating to the Ālvārs and their hymns in the time of the Cōlas after the 10th century by which time their influence had come to be felt in the land and provision had been made for the recital of the hymns in temples. For instance, an inscription of the 15th year of Kulōttuṅga I records the recital of Tiruvāymoḷi of Nammālvār and Tiruppaḷḷi-Eḷuchchi of Tondaradippoḍi Ālvār.<sup>3</sup> Another inscription of the 18th year of the same monarch makes a clear reference to the recital of 'Tēṭṭarumtiral' of the Perumāḷ Tirumoḷi of Kulaśēkara Ālvār.<sup>4</sup> We get information regarding the grant of land for organising the recital of Tiruvāymoḷi in temples from the Uttaramēṇṇī inscriptions of Rājendra Cōla and also from the Eṇṇāyiram inscriptions of the same king.<sup>5</sup> Among the Ālvārs themselves, only two of them, namely Tirumaṅgai and Periyālvār are known to have sung about the kings of their day; Tirumaṅgai Ālwar in his decade on Aṭṭabhuyakaram and Paramēśvara Viṇṇagaram to Nandivarma Pallavan II of the 8th century and to Paramēśvara Pallava who reigned towards the latter half of the 7th century A. D. He is said to refer to the victory of Paramēśvara Pallava over the

3. S. I. I. Vol. IV, p. 146.

4. S. I. I. Vol. III, p. 150.

5. M.E.R. Nos. 176, 194 of 1923 and Ibid No. 33 of 1917.

Caḷukya king Vikramāditya. Periyālvār refers to Kōṇedumāran Pāṇḍya who, according to M. Raghava Aiyangar, may be identified with Māravarman, the father of Parāntaka Neḍunjaḍayan belonging to the 8th century A. D.<sup>6</sup> As such direct references to kings and their exploits are scarce in the works of the Ālvārs and as the other later-day inscriptions shown above serve only to indicate broadly the vogue and popularity of the works of the Ālvārs of a prior epoch, we find that inscriptions cannot be of much help for the early history of Vaiṣṇavism in South India.

(iii) *Literature* :— (a) The Saṅgam classics.

(b) Nalāyira Divya Prabandham.

As the expression of the aspirations and achievements of the life and culture of the people, literature provides one of the many sources for the study of history. It should indeed be considered a very important source for the religious history of South India considering that the life of the people was very much influenced by and was broad-based on religion. It is of utmost importance therefore, that we should try and get a clear picture of the religious History of South India by a study of the ideas and ideals, Gods and Goddesses, faiths and forms of worship, the inter-play of religions and their growth and development under royal patronage etc., as depicted in the earliest extant literature of the Tamils i.e., the Saṅgam works. The study of these classics is specially important for a critical appraisal of the religious

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6. M. Raghava Aiyangar — Śāśanattamiḷ-K-Kavi Caritram, pp. 9 to 10.

background of South India and of the climate and the soil of religion in which the seeds of Vaiṣṇavism (Bhāgatatism) from the North were sown and from which they found ample fruition in the subsequent epochs. Thanks to the labour of several scholars in the field of classical Tamil literature and historical studies based on them, it is now possible to get a fairly reliable picture of this religious milieu in the Sangam age and a fairly connected account of the subsequent religious developments in the post-Sangam and mediaeval epochs in South Indian History.

(b) Nālāyira Divya Prabandham:— The Divya Prabandhams constitute a collection of 4,000 verses sung by the Vaiṣṇava Āḷvārs during a period of intense emotional upsurge in the Tamil country commencing from about the 5th century A. D. to about the latter half of the 9th century A. D. Together with the Dēvāram hymns of the Śaiva Nāyanmars they constitute a unique class of devotional literature reflecting the spirit of Bhakti that swept the country during that period.

It is common knowledge obtained from tradition that the sacred hymns of the Āḷvārs were collected, arranged and set to music by the first of the Vaiṣṇava Ācāryā, Nāthamuni. The Āṛāyirappaḍi Guruparamparai gives the following account of the work done by him. Having heard the recital of ten verses from the Tiruvāymoḷi of Nammāḷvār by some Śrīvaiṣṇava visitors to his place from the Western country and inferring from the last verse of the hymn<sup>7</sup> that it formed a part of the

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7. on Ārāvamudha, the presiding Deity at Kūmbakonam. The verse states that it was part of the thousand sung by Śaṭagōpa.

thousand verses sung by Saint Saṭagōpa of Kurugūr. Nāthamuni proceeded to the birth-place of the Ālvār in his quest for discovering the entire work of Nammālvār there. Parāṅkuśa Dāsa, the disciple of Maḍhura-Kavi whom he met at Kurugūr, informed him that not only the Tiruvāymoḷi of Nammālvār but also the entire Divya-Prabandhams of the other Ālvārs had been lost for a long time and suggested that he might seek the vision and grace of Saṭagōpa by reciting twelve thousand times the hymn of Maḍhura-Kavi on Nammālvār. On his doing so, Saṭagōpa appeared before Nāthamuni and imparted to him not only the Tiruvāymoḷi but also the three thousand verses of the other Ālvārs along with the full knowledge of the three Rahasyās, the entire darśanās and the secret of Aṣṭāṅga Yōga.<sup>8</sup> After staying for a time in Kurugūr, Nāthamuni returned to Vīranārāyaṇapuram and arranged with the help of his nephews for the propagation of the Divya-Prabandhams by setting them to divine music. It is clear that the hymns of the Ālvārs, like the Stōtrās in Sanskrit had been set to music and sung from early times. The songs of the Ālvārs themselves speak to this fact (Kurugūr - Nambī Pāvin Innīśai Pāḍi Tiri-Vanē — Maḍhurākavi-Ālvār). Paṇṇār Pāḍal Inkaviḡaḷ Yāṇāy Tannai Ttān Pāḍi.....(Nammālvār).<sup>9</sup> This is again amply confirmed by an effective passage from the Ācārya Hṛidayam.<sup>10</sup>

8. AR. Guruparamparā Ed. S. Krishnamāchari, Prabhāva Kārthigai, p. 78.

9. Quoted by S. Vaiyapuri Piḷḷai in his introduction to Mudalāyiram, Ed. 1955, p. 5.

10. Ibid. p. 4.



Closely following the setting of the hymns of the Ālvārs to music by Nāthamōṇi and probably also as its consequence, the Divya-Prabandhams came to be divided into two categories of Īsaippā i.e., hymns set to music and sung as songs and Iyarpā treated as pure and simple literature. The Kōiloḷugu, it has been pointed out, explains that Iyarpā has been so classified as that class of hymns were noted chiefly for their literary excellence (Śabdarasa-Pradānamāhaiyālē). It is said that, out of the 24 prabandhams included in the 4,000 collection, 11 including the Rāmānuja Nūṛṇṇandādi belong to the Iyarpā category, the rest being classed probably as Īsaippā.

This leads us to the problem of the determination of the exact number of Prabandhams included in the Nālayiram, the number of verses of each Prabandham making up the total of 4,000, and above all, the place of Rāmānuja Nūṛṇṇandādi in the collection.

Regarding these and particularly the last mentioned problem there is a slight difference of opinion between the Teṅgalai and the Vaḍagalai sects of Śrī Vaiṣṇavas.

The problem of Rāmānuja Nūṛṇṇandādi may be taken up first. There is no doubt at all that both the sects hold this work of Tiruvaraṅgattamudanār as highly sacred, in fact, as sacred as the works of the Ālvārs themselves. They acclaim it as the Prapanna Gāyatrī, the Gāyatrī mantra of the common Bhakta as distinct from the Vēdic Gāyatrī fit to be uttered only by the higher castes. While Vēdānta Dēśika would reckon the 4,000 including the Rāmānuja Nūṛṇṇandādi within the

collection<sup>11</sup>, the Teṅgalai school, notwithstanding their high regard for the work, would reckon the 4,000 excluding it from the collection.

Regarding the number of Prabhandhams in the collection and the number of verses in each, it is enough to point out that both the schools mention only 24 prabandhams, the difference being that Śrī Dēśika reckons Tiruppallāṇḍu and Periyālvār Tirumōḷi as one Prabandham containing 473 verses and the Teṅgalai school would reckon the 4,000 by excluding Rāmānuja Nūṟṟandādi and considering the Tiruppallāṇḍu and Periyālvār Tirumōḷi as two separate prabandhams.

Despite the statement of the Guruparamparās that all the four thousand hymns of the Ālvārs had been secured by Nāthamuni himself and the codification of the Vaiṣṇava canon had been completed by him, the fact that the Vaḍagalai school following Dēśika has included the Rāmānuja Nūṟṟandādi in the four thousand would indicate the probability of the work of redaction begun by Nāthamuni having been completed by stages after him. There is at least one version of the story which would say that he secured only the works of Nammālvār and not all the four thousand hymns<sup>12</sup>. It is not possible to ascertain the truth of this matter. Yet, we would not be far wrong if we infer from the analogy of the codification of the contemporary Saiva canon<sup>13</sup> that the

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11. Vide verse 17 of Prabandha Sāram by Vēdānta Dēśika.

12. Divyasūri Caritam XVI – 13-21.

13. Vide Art. by A. Chidambaranātham Chettiar.

Vaiṣṇava canon was only completed by stages, though the main and substantial part of it had been done by Nāthamuni himself.

It is natural to expect much by way of internal evidence from such an important literary source as the hymns of the Ālvārs for the chronology of the early history of Vaiṣṇavism. As already noted, however, there are only a few such direct references in these works of real importance to chronology. Nevertheless, it would be worth while to study these works with a view to ascertaining, however broadly, their place, in the development of Tamil literature. For, as it would appear from the detailed discussion of the dates of each one of the Ālvārs in the subsequent sections of the book, this would seem to be the most reliable if not the only guide to their chronology. And, chronology apart, these hymns contain valuable information regarding the state of religion and, in general, the life of the people in South India in the age of the Ālvārs.

(iv) *Traditional Works:—*

Tradition, as distinct from legend, is another source of religious history which assumes special importance not because of the paucity of historical material from other sources like Archaeology and Epigraphy, but because it embodies, preserves and transmits many of the fundamental beliefs and religious observances of the community. Without a proper understanding of such beliefs and practices, it would be impossible, almost futile, to attempt to reconstruct the religious history of a people. This is true not only in respect of the early

phases of religious history for which no regular historical records are usually available, but also in respect of its later phases which may be recorded in traditional works of an acknowledgedly historical or quasi-historical nature.

The significance of such narratives will be lost if the facts and incidents mentioned in them are not interpreted in the light of tradition relating to them. Instances are not wanting where historians have been misled and have even erred completely in the interpretation of literary texts and inscriptional passages mainly because of the lack of appreciation or knowledge of the tradition connected with the facts narrated in them.

It is precisely for the reasons stated above that next only to the Śaṅgam and post-śaṅgam literature of the period from the 2nd to the 8th centuries of the Christian era and works of the Ālvārs themselves, writers on the early history of Vaiṣṇavism in South India have relied very largely on traditional hagiological works like the Guruparamparās, and quasi-historical treatises like the Divya-Sūri Ćaritam and Prapannāmṛtam. In a work like the present which attempts to present a connected historical account of the history of Vaiṣṇavism from the earliest times upto Rāmānuja, covering as it does the early and mediaeval phases of its history would necessarily involve a review and, wherever necessary, a reexamination of the views already expressed on the subject, based largely on these traditional works. This will, in its turn, properly entail a thorough and critical examination of these works as source works for our study.



## CHAPTER II

### TRADITIONAL LITERATURE - DIVYASŪRI CARITAM

Materials for the study of the history of Vaiṣṇavism in South India are amply forthcoming from a variety of sources the most important of which are literary. These literary sources, for the most part in Sanskrit, Tamil and Manipravāḷam, can be easily divided into the purely historical and the non-historical according as they are acknowledgedly – historical treatises or merely works of art with general literary excellence for their sole aim. While the Ārāyirappaḍi Guruparamparā-Prabhāvam of Pinbaḷagiya Jiyar can be assigned to the first category, the Divyasūri Caritam of Garuḍavāhana Paṇḍita, another important source work must be said to belong to the second group. The latter is a beautiful Kāvya in Sanskrit modelled on the classics of Kālidāsa<sup>1</sup> the subject being the lives of the Divyasūris as the Āḷwārs and Āçāryās are called in Vaiṣṇava phraseology. It would appear from the colophons at the end of the first sarga of the work that the name of the author is Śrīnivāsa Kavi and that Garuḍavāhana Paṇḍita and Kavivaidya Purandhara were his 'Aparanāmadhēyās' or titles. It would also appear from these colophons that the father of Śrīnivāsa Kāvi was a certain Varada of the Vādhūla

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1. Compare the, opening verses of the Kāvya with those of Raghu-Vamsa.

Gōtra while his mother's name was Lōkēśa. The prose colophon, however, says that he belonged to the Kāśyapa Gōtra in that it calls him Kāśyapakula-tilaka. More about this discrepancy regarding the author's Gōtra can be reserved for a later occasion.

It has been accepted that the author of the D. S. Caritam<sup>2</sup> was a contemporary of Rāmānuja. The opinion is unanimously held that the Kāvya is earlier in point of time to the Ārayirappaḍi<sup>3</sup> and that in fact formed the basis for the later work of Pinbaḷagiya Jiyar<sup>4</sup>. This contemporaneity of GaruḍavāhanaPaṇḍita with Rāmānuja is made to rest mainly on three grounds which can be examined one by one.

(i) The author of the D. S. Caritam does not mention the demise of Rāmānuja but simply says that he was awaiting his end after the full completion of his activities in Srīrangam<sup>5</sup>.

This cannot be by any means an argument for the supposed contemporaneity. In the first place, it must be noted that the author has given all about the Ācārya's doings in this world in full two sargas the 17th and the

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2. Short for Divyasūri Caritam.

3. Short for Ārayirappaḍi Guruparamparā Prabhāvam.

4. T. A. Gopinatha Rao - History of Sri Vaisnavās, page 14. It can be noted that Mr. Gopinatha Rao places D.S. Caritam chronologically before Pinbaḷagiya Jiyar's work.

5. Ibid p.14.

18th so much so that no prominent phase of his life and doings as can be glanced from other sources has been omitted. Scholars have been misled by the fact that there is no mention in so many words of his demise. For that matter the demise of none of the Ālvārs is actually mentioned in the work, the concluding portion of each life merely stating that they lived ever afterwards doing good to mankind<sup>5a</sup>. It would be absurd to argue on that ground that Garuḍavāhana Paṇḍita was contemporary with early Ālvārs. The fact is that pious sentiment precludes the mention of the demise of such holy and venerable personages as Rāmānua, the presumption being that the great souls are still with us<sup>5b</sup>.

5a. Nirvaṇṇyatam tē paramānubhūtiḥ pratāritāntāḥ  
karaṇān prabaudhān/ Kṛtvā bhadhaksarvajanāvanāyā  
yōgam samāsādyā punar vichēruḥ// – D. S. Caritam.  
Mysore Edn. Sarga II. Sloka 2.

5b. “ஆழ்வார்களுக்கும் உடையவருக்கும் தீர்த்த  
திவஸம் சொல்லா தொழிவாரென்னென்னில் :- அத்  
யாபி அகிவாத் மோத்தாரணர்த்தமாக அர்ச்சாவிக்ர-  
ஹங்களை அங்கீகரித்து இங்கே எழுந்தருளியிருக்கிறார்  
களாகையாலே, அன்றிக்கே அவர்கள் இங்கிலும் கால்  
வாங்கிப் போகில் ஆத்ம கோடிகளுக்கு ஈடேற வழி  
யில்லையிறே. இத்தை நினைத்திறே நம் பூர்வாசார்  
யர்கள் தீர்த்தம் கொண்டாடித் திதி பரிபாலனம்  
பண்ணு தொழுகிறதும்.”

(Ārayirappadi Ed. S. Krishnamācharya pp. 213-214)

The point is made clear in the passage relating to the close of Rāmānua's life in this world. Quite in conformity with the sentiment expressed above, the Jiyar says : – “.... சித்திரையிலே செய்ய திருவாதிரையிலே

But then the question arises - why did the author of the D. S. caritam stop with the life of Rāmānuja. Could he not have proceeded further if he was later than Rāmānuja? These questions are easily answered. It is clear from the 'Pratigñā' set forth in the opening verses of the first sarga itself that he confined himself to the task of giving an account of lives of the Ālvārs leading up to and ending with Rāmānuja<sup>6</sup>. It is but natural that

..... அவதரித்து ..... அகில சாஸ்திரங்களையும்  
அப்யஸித்து.....பெரிய நம்பியை ஆச்ரயித்து .....  
பஞ்சஸம்ஸ்காரங்களையும் பெற்று ..... ஆச்ரமப்ராப்தி  
பண்ணியருளி ..... ஸ்ரீரங்கைஸ்வரயத்தைப் பெற்று  
..... ஸ்ரீபாஷ்யமருளிச் செய்து ..... திக்விஜயம்  
பண்ணி.....மேல் நாட்டுக் கெழுந்தருளி ..... செல்வப்  
பிள்ளையைப் பெற்றெடுத்து ..... ப்ரதிஷ்டியப்பித்தருளி  
..... அர்ச்சாவிக்ரத்தை அங்கீகரித்து ..... கால  
முள்ளதனையும் இங்கே ஸுப்ரதிஷ்டிதராய் விளங்கா  
நின்று கொண்டு வாழ்ந்தருளு கிருராய்த்து உடையவர்”

Ibid p. 214.

Sometimes when the demise of holy personage has to be mentioned it is not put down in so many words, but conveyed through veiled suggestions often in euphemistic phraseology for instance, we have with reference to the demise of Rāmānuja the following sloka.

माघशुद्ध दशम्यां तु मध्याह्ने मन्दवासरे ।  
योगिरास्व भोगीश भावं स्वमेसमभ्यगात् ॥

Ibid p. 263.

6. सरोमुखानां भक्तानां लक्ष्मणायैवसायिनाम् ।  
• अवतारापदानादीन्वक्ष्ये ऽहं विदितं मया ॥

D. S. Caritam, Mysore Edn.  
Sarga I, Sloka 12.

he did not go beyond that well defined task set for himself. The reason for such a 'Paratigña' must have been that the Sri Vaiṣṇava Guruparamparai viz. the accredited line of Ācāryic descent after Rāmānuja was different for different Śrī Vaiṣṇava sets and that with Rāmānuja ended a definite epoch in the history of Vaiṣṇavism in South India. Evidently the author believed that the schismatic period of post-Rāmānuja Vaiṣṇavism was not a fit subject for Kāvya delineation<sup>7</sup>.

(ii) Tradition has it that Garuḍavāhana Paṇḍita wrote the kāvya and that it proclaimed in the august presence of Rāmānuja himself and his chief disciples.<sup>8</sup>

An argument from tradition has to be necessarily subject to the most careful scrutiny. It is true that we have references to a certain Garuḍavāhana Paṇḍita in

7. When it is established that Garuḍavāhana Paṇḍita is definitely posterior to Rāmānuja, this fact namely his stopping with the life of Rāmānuja would lead as to the inference that he must have lived long after the great teacher. For it is only from the times of Piḷḷaiḷōkāchārya and Vedānta Dēśika nearly two centuries after Rāmānuja that the schismatic period begins definitely. Once splits came into being, different schools began to construct for themselves different genealogies or succession list of Ācāryās in the direct line of descent from Rāmānuja. It would be natural then for a writer of this later schismatic period to stop with the life of Rāmānuja in a work of this kind.

8. V. Swāmi Iyengār, Translation of D.S. Čaritam in Tamil, Harisamya Divākaram Press, Preface p. 1.

Kōiloḷugu. It is true also that he is mentioned therein as a contemporary of Rāmānuja. For, among the many acts of the great Ācārya in connection with the organisation of the temple and its affairs in Śrīraṅgam there is one connected with the name of Garuḍavāhana Paṇḍita. Rāmānuja is said to have re-established the Dhanvantri Nilaya within the presincts of the temple, placed it in charge of his disciple Garuḍavāhana and entrusted him with the service of offering 'Kashāyam' every night to God Śrī Raṅganātha.<sup>9</sup>

Apart from this there is no further mention of this Garuḍavāhana Paṇḍita having been the author of any Kāvya either in the Kōiloḷugu or elsewhere. It is inconceivable how this fact could have been omitted in traditional works like the Ārayirappaḍi, the Rāmānujārya Divya Ḍaritam and the Prapaṇnāmṛtam. While the first named work of Pinbaḷagiya Jīyar does not even refer to Garuḍavāhana Paṇḍita by name or to the Service allotted to him, the second named biography by Piḷḷailōkan Jīyar makes but a passing reference to the organisation of this daily routine of service by Rāmānuja. Taking our stand then on the Kōiloḷugu alone we can say no more than that there was a certain Garuḍavāhana Paṇḍita a

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9. "பின்பு உடையவர்.....தம் சிஷ்யரான கருடவாஹந பண்டிதரைக் கொண்டு பெருமாளுக்கு சிகிதஸிப்பித்து, பூர்வம் புராணஸித்தமாய் ஜீர்ணமாயிருந்த தந்வந்த்ரியை ப்ரதிஷ்டிப்பித்து, அந்தக் கோயிலை கருடவாஹந பண்டிதருக்குக் கட்டளையிட்டு, அவரிடத்திலும் நித்யமாக ராத்ரி திருக்காப்பு சேர்க்கிறதற்கு முன்பாகக் குடிநீர்பால் அலங்காரமாக வந்து அமுது செய்தருளும்படி திட்டம்பண்ணி..... Kōiloḷugu p. 48.

contemporary of Rāmānuja who was entrusted with a particular service in the temple. The authorship of D. S. Çaritam is a different problem altogether unless we can establish upon sufficient grounds that this is the same Garuḍavāhana who wrote the Kāvya also. In other words the question still remains - is this Garuḍavāhana the disciple and contemporary of Rāmānuja, the author of D. S. Çaritam? There can be no answer to this question from pure tradition. The contemporaneity of Garuḍavāhana Paṇḍita with Rāmānuja may be established but not so that of the author of D. S. Çaritam with Rāmānuja.

(iii) The definiteness lacking in tradition is sometimes sought in the Kāvya itself. The particular sloka which is supposed to establish the contemporaneity runs as follows:-

राज्ञीयोवथरण लालसौ मुरारौ तत्किंषप्रशममदापयत्कुषायम् ।  
 आरोग्योपपदमदाकुलव्यशालां श्रीधन्वन्तरिमायतच्चकार  
 रङ्गेन्दोस्सगसअवाहन भट्टकुसं पथ्यायानुदिनमदाप यत्कुषायम् ॥

(D. S. Çaritam, 17th Sarga, Sl. 7)

A free rendering of the above into English will be -  
 "In order that Śrī Ranganātha may not suffer from the effects of poison, Rāmānuja offered him a 'Kashāyam', (thereafter) permanently established a vaidyaśāla and made (them) look upon it as the shrine of Dhanvantri no less than Hari Himself. Ever afterwards Garuḍavāhana Bhaṭṭa was entrusted with the service of the daily offering of the 'Kashāyam' to the deity."

The reference to Garuḍavāhana Bhaṭṭa in the above text is clearly in the third person. There is not even a

veiled suggestion of a personal reference to himself by the author. We will not, therefore, be – justified in concluding on the strength of the sloka that the author of D. S. Caritam was a contemporary of Rāmanuja. The prevailing opinion is based on the assumption that Garuḍavāhana Paṇḍita is the name of a person. It is not so. We have the authority of the Kōiloḷugu itself to maintain that it is but a title and that it was borne by all those in charge of the ‘Ārōgyaśālā’ in Śrīrangam ever since Rāmanuja.<sup>10</sup> On the mere similarity of the titles the disciple and contemporary of Rāmanuja has been identified with the author of D. S. Caritam. On the other hand it may well be that the author was a much later person who bore that title.

The prevailing notion regarding the contemporaneity of Garuḍavāhana Paṇḍita with Rāmanuja is thus seen to be baseless. It will be fruitful at this stage to enquire if anything in the nature of positive evidence can be gathered from the Kāvya itself regarding the author and his date. From this point of view the colophons at the end of the sargas may be examined.

The verse colophon viz. the śloka beginning with स्वामी रङ्गपतिः gives out important information. It

10. பூர்வம் ஆரோக்யசாலையும் திருநடை மாளிகையும்.....உடையவர் கைங்கர்யமாயிருந்தும் துலுக்க வாணத்திலே சேதமாகையால் இந்தக் கோயிலும் கோபுரமும் மதில்களும் திருமண்டபமும் முன்னிலை முகமண்டபமும் கருட வாஹன பண்டிதர், கைங்கர்யம். உடையவர் நாள் முதலாக ஆரோக்ய சாலாதிபதிகளுக்கு கருடவாஹன பண்டிதரென்று பட்டப்பேர் நடந்து வருகிறது.

Kōiloḷugu p.120.



states that Garuḍa Śrīvāhana or Garuḍavāhana was the son of a certain Varada of the Vādhūla Gōtra and that his mother's name was Lōkēśa. We are also informed that his Guru or Ācāryā was one Varavarādhīśa and that he had for his patron God Śrī Ranganātha himself. Immediately after this verse colophon we have another colophon in prose which gives additional information about the author of the work. We learn that his original name was Śrinivāsa Kavi and that he had the titles Kavi-vaiddya Purandara and Garuḍavāhana Paṇḍita. The term 'Ārōgyaśālā Vallabha' denotes that he was in charge of the Dhanvantri shrine in the temple of Ranganātha while Kāśyapakulatīlakā indicates that he belonged to the Kāśyapa Gōtra and not Vādhūla as stated in the verse colophon. One is apt to conclude that in the face of such a contradictory version regarding the author's Gōtra, both cannot be true and that one of them must be rejected before the other is taken up. Thus we are confronted with a serious discrepancy which makes us doubt the genuineness of the colophons themselves.

The facts given above regarding the Garuḍavāhanās will help us to solve this difficulty. It was said that there have been several who bore the title since the days of Rāmanuja. Though the Wardenship of the Dhanvantrinilaya and the title attached to it were hereditary just like many other rights of service in the Śrīrangam temple they seem to have been enjoyed by different families on different occasions. At any rate we learn that the Uttama Nambis had long enjoyed this right of service together with its emoluments in Śrīrangam; and they were certainly Kāśyapa's. In all probability the

original Garuḍavāhana Paṇḍita, the disciple and contemporary of Rāmānuja also belonged to the Kāśyapa Gōtra. We have the authority of the Kōiloḷugu again to state that several of these proprietary temple rights and trusteeships changed hands by being bought and sold and that this particular Dhanvantri Nilaya had its own vicissitudes<sup>11</sup>. At one stage in its history it seems to have come under the care of Kōil-Kandāḍai Annan family, members of which belonged to the Vādhūla Gōtra<sup>11a</sup>. There is nothing improbable therefore in the title having been held at some time or other by a person belonging to the Vādhūla Gōtra.

11. Enumerating the list of duties assigned to a particular group of persons in Srirangam called the Sthānattār (people of the locality) the following observation is made regarding the Garuḍavāhanās' rights of service. அது முதலாக நாச்சியார்கோயில் தழையிடுவார் கைங்கர்யங்களும் கருடமுத்தரையும் உத்தமநம்பியாதீனமாக நடந்துவருகிறது. கருடவாஹன பண்டிதர் கைங்கர்யமான.....குடிநீர்பாலமுது கைங்கர்யமும் வேருக நடந்துவருகிறது.” Kōil Oḷugu, Page 83.

11a. There is a passage referring to certain changes in several proprietary rights of service in the Srirangam temple pointing out that in Cir. 1340 Saka (1418 A. D.) that there was a dispute between Vēdāchārya Bhaṭṭa and the Kōil Kandāḍais of the Vādhūla Gōtra, regarding several services and honours included in which was the management of the service connected with Dhanvantri shine of the Garuḍa-Vāhanās, and the agreement entered into by the two agents of Jiyars with the Uttamanambi in the presence of Gōpanna Thimmarajar

We shall now examine the two colophons in the light of the foregoing brief history of the Ārōgyaśāla and its trusteeship. The prose colophon must in all probability have been a later introduction by persons who were misled into thinking that the author of the Kāvya was original Garuḍāvahana Paṇḍita of the Kāśyapa Gōtra. The very fact that they have not dared to obliterate the verse colophon altogether from the Kāvya in spite of their apparent contradiction shows that it must have been the original and genuine one by the author himself. It is unusual and not quite in the fitness of things that a Kāvya writer should write the and the Sthalathār in Śaka One thousand three hundred and forty in the year Vikāri.

The agreement stated that the two agents of the Jiyar declared that they would enjoy the said honours and services till *the return of the Kandādaīs*. (The Uttamanambi to whose name they wrote the contract was the sisya of the Kōil Kandāḍaīs and was evidently acting on their behalf).

An incomplete sloka is quoted to support the above:-

विकारिणि त्र्युत्तमनम्बि नाम्नः

वेदार्थं भट्टस्स .....

वितीर्थपत्रं समये तथाऽग्रहीत् ॥

Kōil Oḷugu P. P 113 to 114.

From the prose narrative in the Kōil Oḷugu regarding the dispute and the agreement, the missing portions of the sloka may be filled and reconstructed as follows:-

याते शकाब्दे नवलोकसम्मिन्ने विकारिणि त्र्युत्तमनम्बि नाम्नः ।

वेदार्थं भट्टस्स नृपस्य सन्निधौ वितीर्थपत्रं समयं तथाऽग्रहीत् ॥

B. O. ७५. 4 - ७ - 3 - ५ = 1 Saka 1340

colophon to his work in prose. Above all there being nothing at all incongruous in Garuḍavāhana Paṇḍita belonging to the Vādhūla Gōtra, we can safely take it that it is the verse colophon that originally belonged to the Kāvya and that the other one in prose was a later introduction.

The names 'Varavarādhīśa' and 'Vādhūla Varada' are familiar even to those who have but a nodding acquaintance with Vaiṣṇava tradition in this country. The appellation 'Guru' to the former makes the identity still more unmistakable. The reference in all probability is to Varavara Muni or Maṇavāḷa-Māmuni, undoubtedly one of the great Śrī Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas after Rāmaṇuja. Similarly Vādhūla Varada can be identified with one of the early Ācāryas of the Kōḷkandālai Aṇṇan family. But for the fact that there are two of that name immediately after Varavara Muni in that line of Ācāryas we will be in a position to identify this Vādhūla Varada of the Colophon with the famous Vādhūla Varada, the first of the Aṇṇan family of Ācāryas. It may be mentioned in passing that this Vādhūla Varada or Kōḷkandālai Aṇṇan as he was commonly known was one of the eight chief disciples (Aṣṭa Diggajās) of Śrī Varavara Muni. His grand-son bore the same name. We are thus in a position to infer that Śrīnivāsa Kavi must have been the son of either the first of the Aṇṇan family or his grandson, also a Vādhūla Varada. It is then just in the fitness of things that he claims Varavara Muni as his guru. Taking our stand on the identifications set forth above we may assign the D. S. Charitam to the last quarter of the 15th Century or the first quarter

of the 16th, which must be the approximate date of its author who came three generations after Varavara Muni (1369 to 1445).

Fortunately for us there is further evidence forthcoming from an unexpected and till now unrecongised source confirming the foregoing. There are two MSS of this Kāvya in the Government Oriental Manuscripts Library, Madras, which contain more than eighteen sargas<sup>12</sup>. This portion over and above the eighteen Sargas found in the Mysore edition of the Kavya consists of about 110 verses. The last of the slokas ends abruptly with the first half of its pūrvārdha thus ‘शङकुर्णां शजो रङ्गी’ thereby indicating clearly that that portion is incomplete in the MSS. In other words we have reason to presume that there are some more slokas comprising this portion. Since this has not so far been published we have to rely on these MSS alone which are incomplete. The incompleteness of this unpublished part precludes the possibility of any definite conclusions regarding its place in the Kavya. We are unable to say for certain whether this formed part of the Kavya itself as its 19th Sarga or was merely the composition of a later writer who added it on to the original work of 18 Sargas as a possible ‘continuation’. Thus problems arise as to the nature and authorship of this unpublished text.<sup>13</sup>

12. (a) Trennial catalogue of MSS Vol. 6 (Sanskrit) No. 4670.

(b) Ibid Vol. 5 Part 1 (Sanskrit) B. No. 4558 P. 6635.

13. Refer appendix for the text.

A proper solution of these problems depends largely on the right understanding of these texts. We know how the 18th Sarga completes the life of Rāmanuja and finishes up by saying that after his labours in the cause of Vaiṣṇavism in this world he was peacefully awaiting his end<sup>14</sup>. As if in continuation of this, the narrative of the unpublished part begins by announcing an interview between Rāmanuja and one of his chief disciples by name Dāśarathi or Mudaliyaṇḍan. The latter prays to the master – which prayer runs to nearly seventy slokas in the text<sup>15</sup> – and requests to be informed as to how the two-fold task of the propagation of the 'Śrī-Bhāṣya and the Divya-Prabandha would be carried on in future. The anxious disciple's concern for the future of his religion was such that he wanted to know the names of persons who would be engaged in such Pravachanās. At this request, Rāmanuja first gives out in order the prominent names of Āçāryas in the traditional Śrī-Bhāṣya paramparā starting from Tirukkurugai-Ppirān Piḷḷan and ending with Vēdānta Dēśika. Then he declares again in chronological order the prominent Āçāryās in the Bhagavad-Viṣhaya paramparā commencing from Piḷḷan and ending with Varavara Muni. After Varavara-Muni

14. इत्याशास्य सरश्शठान्तकमुख श्रीदिव्यसूर्याकृतीः  
 आचार्यस्य च तत्प्रबन्धनिवहैस्साधप्रतिष्ठाप्य सः ।  
 श्रीरङ्गादि भ धामसु खयमभूत् श्रीदिव्यसूरिव्रजै-  
 स्साकं परमं पदं जिगमिषुः रामानुजाख्यौ मुनिः ।

D. S. Charitam: Sarga 18:  
 Sloka 98 (Mysore edition).

15. Great skill has been employed in the composition of these slokas.

this Dravidamānya-Pravachana is said to be continued by Vādhūla Varada, Abhirāma-Vara, and others in the Anṇan family of Āçāryās. Rāmānuja concludes by saying that Śrinivāsa Kavi alias Garuḍavāhana would write the story of the Ālvārs in Kāvya form and that thus both the pravachanās would go on uninterrupted in future for the good of mankind. Having this assuring account of the future from his master, Daśarathi also gets ready to depart from this world and eagerly awaits his end. From this point onwards, the narrative proceeds to mention one by one the places in which the Ālvārs and Āçāryās ended their last days in this world. In so doing it comes to an abrupt end after Mahāpūrṇa or Peria-Nambi, one of the preceptors of Rāmānuja.

There is nothing in the foregoing summary of the content of the unpublished part to show that Garuḍavāhana Paṇḍita himself could not have been the author of it. On the other hand, the reference to himself and his work in the words of Rāmānuja and the fact that the narrative regarding the future course of Dravidamānya pravachana stops with his name are quite suggestive. They lead us to the inference that the author of D. S. Charita contrived to give out in a summarised form the Śri-Bhāṣya and Bhagavad-Viṣaya paramparās upto his own day and cleverly introduced his own name at the end of it all. It is evident that he has cleverly managed to convey all this as though narrated by Rāmānuja, the setting for all purposes being perhaps imaginary. In the light of all this, one may reasonably conclude that this unpublished text comprises what is possibly the 19th Sarga of D. S. Charitam, by Garuḍa-

vāhana Paṇḍita of which some portions are unfortunately missing in the MSS we are referring to.

The contents of this missing portion, however, can be easily guessed. The scheme of the narrative in the available text is clear. We saw how after the conclusion of Rāmānuja's account of the future to Dāśarathi, the text begins order with the places where the Āḷvārs and Āçāryās passed away from this world. In this way we are first given in a series the Bṛndāvana locations of the Āḷvārs beginning with the first three of them. Incidentally, we are told about how and where persons like 'Kani Kaṇṇan', 'Śrī Vallaba Pāndya', 'Lōkasaranga-Muni', 'Dēva-Dēvi', all of whom were connected with one or other of the Āḷvārs as gleaned from the Guruparamparā accounts attained salvation. Then comes the list of Āçāryās beginning from Nāthamuni, and the places where they attained mukti. From Nathamuni onwards we go on right upto Mahāpūrṇa. The last incomplete śloka evidently refers to Tiruvarangapperumāḷ Araiyaṛ, one of the preceptors of Rāmānuja. We have only to infer from the trend of the narrative so far that the remaining portions which are missing should refer to the passing away of the three other Āçāryās of Rāmānuja after Mahāpūrṇa and the Araiyaṛ namely Periya-Tirumalai Nambi, Tirukkōṭṭiyūr Nambi, and Tirumalai-Anḍan<sup>16</sup>. Possibly it would contain references also to Māranēr-Nambi and Tirukkacchi-Nambi before finally coming upto Rāmānuja himself. It is highly probable—almost certain—that the narrative stopped with mention of the passing away of Rāmānuja at Śrīrangam.

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16. Ramanuja had five Āçāryās.



When once the genuineness of this 19th Sarga – if it can be so called — is granted, that portion referring to Garuḍavāhana becomes significant as affording an unmistakable solution for the problem, viz., the date of D. S. Charita. We saw how the narration of names proceeded chronologically in both the paramparās. We also saw how the author of D. S. Charita referred to himself as the son of ‘Śrīmad-Varada-Dēśika, the grand-son of the Vādhūla Varadanārāyaṇa Guru. In this way what was a little indefinite in the colophon sloka is made definite by this reference. In other words, while all that could be learnt from the colophon was that he must have been the son of a certain Vādhūla Varada we are now led to conclude that Vādhūla Varada was the grand-son of the first Ācārya of the same name. Garuḍavāhana Paṇḍita must then be assigned to the fourth generation after Varavara Muni – a conclusion not at all different from that derived from an examination of the colophon itself. Thus the evidence contained in the colophon regarding ‘the date of the Kāvya is amply confirmed by this yet unpublished part of D. S. Charita.’

The conclusion need not be altered even in case the genuineness of the 19th sarga is doubted. For then, the only alternative is to suppose that all that portion is a later day addition to the original Kāvya, by an unknown author<sup>17</sup>. It may also be argued that the conversation

17. This is what is called technically a “continuation”. These are cases where some one has deliberately added to ..... the author’s text words or sentences out of his own head for the sake of completeness ..... ”

Longlois and C. H. Seignobos – Introduction to the study of History, Chapter I.

between Rāmānuja and Dāśarathi is at best an imaginary one. Granting all this, one cannot escape the fact that the narration of the post-Rāmānuja Śrī Bhāṣya and Bhagavad-Viṣaya Paramparās is in exact chronological order as preserved in tradition and that Garuḍavāhana Paṇḍita is definitely mentioned as the author of the Kāvya and referred to clearly as the son of Vādhūla Varada. It is just possible that the author of this part, whoever it was, wanted to give us the aforesaid Paramparās and invented for that purpose the imaginary setting of a dialogue between Rāmānuja and Dāśarathi. This device is common to Paurāṇikās. The Prapannāmṛtam, for instance, gives the lives of the Ālvārs as though narrated by Bhaṭṭar to Vedānti (Nanjīyar). In fact this is a common device which might have been followed by this unknown author for his own narrative. This need not, however, prevent us from accepting the genuineness of the narrative itself specially when it is seen to conform most exactly to accepted tradition. There is certainly no reason to doubt the Paramparās given. Consequently there can be no reason to doubt the references to Garuḍavāhana Paṇḍita also. The unknown authorship of this text and its imaginary purāṇic setting are absolutely immaterial considerations.

The conclusion is thus borne in upon us that the date of Garuḍavāhana Paṇḍita and his work, the D. S. Charita, is the first half of the 16th Century A. D. Having thus been chronologically posterior to the Ārayirappadi, the D.S. Charita could never have been the basis for the work of Jīyar. A careful examination of the texts of both the Ārayirappadi and the D. S. Charita

will compel us to revise the accepted views on the matter. The following extracts of translations and parallel passages from both the sources will bear out the contention:-

(1) Translation of the original Ārayirappaḍi words into Sanskrit:- some typical instances may be given.

Kaṇikaṇṇan - Kaṇikrishṇah

Uḍaiyanangaiyār - Nāthanāyikā

Tiruvālmārpār - Kamalaidhitha Vakshasah

Arantāngiār - Dharmadharah

Séntāmaraikkaṇṇan - Pātala-lōchanah.

We have only to look a little carefully into the compositions of these sets of names to be able to conclude that Pinbaḷagiya Jāyar's names are the originals and the D. S. Charita ones are the exact translations of them. The combination of two words Kaṇi & Krishṇah into the compound Kaṇi-Krishṇah is of course understandable. But then, what is the meaning of 'Kaṇi' in the compound? If the Sanskrit term alone is the original, this 'Kaṇi' in the compound should have a meaning. As it is, however, we know no such word in Sanskrit. On the other hand the adjunct 'Kaṇi' in the Tamil word 'Kaṇikaṇṇan' denotes in all probability his proficiency in the Sāstras. It becomes clear then, that the more intelligible Tamil word 'Kaṇikaṇṇan' is the original and that the Sanskrit 'Kaṇi Krishṇah' is the translation. Similarly the very nature of the two set of names must enable us to infer which is the original and which is the translation.

2) Where translation of the original Tamil words was found difficult, the author of the D. S Charita kept

them as they were in their original form. Often the Tamil forms had to be retained for fear of translations leading to absurdities. A few examples may be given:— ‘Tiruvaḷudi Vaḷanāḍar’ – the name of one of the ancestors of Nammāḷvār as given in the Ārayirappaḍi is simply retained in its original form as ‘Srimadvaḷudi Vaḷa Nāḍēndrah’ in the Kāvya. Just in the same way ‘Kāri’ is retained in Sanskrit without any alteration. The name ‘Pōrkāri’ is also similarly retained because the possible translation of it into ‘Swarnakāri’ would lead to an absurdity. For, ‘Swarnākāri’ in Sanskrit denotes a Goldsmith.

3) Occasionally in the kāvya we come across instances of mistaken Sanskritization of the original which betray its posteriority to it. One such typical instance is the translation of the Tamil word ‘Maṇṇi-āṇṇakaraiyil irundu’ in the Ārayirappaḍi into the Sanskrit ‘Mṛdāpagat’. We see how ‘Maṇṇiāṇu’ was misunderstood as ‘Maṇṇāṇu’ and how this misunderstanding has led to the above translation.

4) Translations apart, we find several instances in which the words, compounds of words and wholesale phrases of Manipravalam texts of the Ārayirappaḍi are bodily imported into the Kāvya. Here are a few of them:— “அநந்தரம் உல்ப ஸம்வேஷ்டி தமாய் ஒன்றும் ரூபீகரியாமல் அவதரிக் கையாலே . அந்த உல்பா வ்ருத பிண்டா க்ருதியானது. Etc. Etc (1)

(a) निक्षिप्य तस्यान्तिकुवेतगर्भन्ति मुल्बावृत मुल्बणाभम् ।

‘தத்பத்னியும் கர்ப்பவதியாய்.....ஒரு குமாரனைப் ப்ரஸவிக்க’

- (b) ஸ்ரீவிதூரரைப் போலவே விளங்குகிற அந்தப் புத்  
ரனைக் கண்டு அவருக்கு 'கணி-கண்ணன்' என்று  
திருநாமம் சாத்தி அகில வித்யைகளையும்,  
அதிகரிப்பித்தார்கள். (3)

कालेगते साहरिभलिभाजं प्रासूतशू द्री सुधियंकुमारम् ।  
तेजस्विनातेन रराज शूद्रा यथा माता हि विदुरेणपूर्वम् ॥  
चकार नाम्ना कणिकृष्णमेनमशिक्ष यत्सर्वकलाश्च तातः ।

- (c) .....ஆழ்வாரும் தம்முடைய வலத்திருவடியின்  
பெருவிரலிலே ஒரு கண்ணைத் திறந்துவிட, அக்  
கண்ணில் நின்றும் அக்நி ப்ரணய ஹீதவஹ  
கோடி கல்பமாய் ஜ்வலித்துக்கொண்டு கிளம்ப,  
கோடி வைச்வாநர பாக்யமாய் அத்யார்க்க  
கோடி நிப தீர்க்க ஜ்வாலா ஜாஜ்வல்யமாநாக்  
நியில் சம்புலின் லோசநாக்நி.....அடங்க.....  
etc., etc.,

समीक्ष्यतं शाम्भवलोजनाग्निं प्रसारयामास तदाम्बुजेसः ।  
ज्वलत्कृशान् न्यकृशान्यभूवं स्तयोस्तदा तादृशलोचनाग्निः ॥ (6)  
अत्यर्कवैश्वानरमस्य पादचक्षुर्महाससौदुमशम्भुवानः ।

- (d) இவர்கள் ஒருவருக்கொருவர் பாலும் பாலும்  
சேர்ந்தாப்போலவும் தேனும் தேனும் கூடினாற்  
போலவும்.....பகவதனுபவம் பண்ணியிருந்  
தார்கள்.

यथा पयोभिः पयसां समागमो यथा मधूनां मधुभिश्च संगमः ।  
तथौकरस्यात्प्रणयस्तयोरभूत् मुकुन्दचिन्तारस मुह्यदात्मनोः ॥ (7)

(3)	Arayirappadi	Ed. S. Krishnamacharya	P. 13
(6)	..	..	P. 14
(7)	..	..	P. 17

(2)	D. S. Charitam	Mysore Edn.	Sarg II Sl 36
(4)	"	"	" " Sls 48-50
(6)	"	"	" " Sls 72-74
(8)	"	"	Sarg III Sl 12

Paradoxical as it may seem, it is the deviations of the Kāvya from its original more than their close similarities, parallelisms and interchangeable texts that indicate clearer still the posteriority of the D. S. Charita to the Ārayirappaḍi. While in general the Kāvya follows the original even in respect of the sequence of the narrative, it makes occasional departures from it. Broadly analysed, such departures may be found to occur when :

1) the poet indulges in descriptive passages. This involves however, a deviation in manner rather than in detail.

2) he has placed the life of Nammālvār just after Tirumaḷisai and not last as is done by the Jīyar. -This again need not be seriously considered. In an introductory note to the life of Kulaśēkara after Tirumaḷisai, the Jīyar himself points out the reason for treating the life of Nimmālvār last and not in the traditional order after Tirumaḷisai. He declares that he reserves Nammālvār to the last on the ground of his greater importance than the rest of the Ālvārs<sup>18</sup>. The author of the D. S. Charita perhaps never troubled himself to make any

18. “இங்கே அவதாரக்ரமம் பார்க்கில் நம்மாழ்வார் திருஅவதார வைபவம் சொல்லாயிருக்க, ஸ்ரீ குலசேகராழ்வார் திருவவதாரவைபவம் சொல்லுகிறது. அவயவ நிருபணம் பண்ணியே அவயவியை நிருபிக்க வேண்டுகையாலே”

change and simply narrated events in the traditional order. In the result, both of them having accepted the traditional order, we see no deviation at all one from the other.

3) When he has elaborated the wedding of Sri Āṇḍaḷ with Sri Ranganātha in about 4 sargas. – It is not so much this elaboration as some details contained in it that are at variance with facts mentioned in the Ārāyirappaḍi. For instance, it is said in the Kāvya that all the Āḷvārs met together at the wedding, that Tirumangai Āḷvār attacked the bridal party and robbed Sri Ranganātha of his ornaments and so on. Indeed it is a romantic pen picture that we get in this part of the work and it may be said unhesitatingly that it forms the best part of it. It is clear that Garuḍavāhana Paṇḍita made use of the comparatively drab details given by the Jīyar about the marriage in order to weaver this enchanting narrative. If he made bold to assert that all the twelve Āḷvārs attended the wedding, that a regular wedding feast and an entertainment were held in the residence of Nammāḷvār and other such details, it is certainly to enhance the Kāvya interest and to embellish the essentially romantic setting. In the whole range of the life of the Āḷvārs no other episode than this wedding could have been made the centre of interest in a kāvya. It is no wonder therefore, that he chose to elaborate this theme, and made it in fact, the central one of his work. In so doing, it is natural that he gave free play to his poetic imagination to create new incidents and impart details not found in the prosaic narration of the Ārāyirappaḍi. These departures, then, from the original were made

with a purpose and were called for by the author's scheme of Kāvya delineation in the most classic style known to Sanskrit literature.

. It would be difficult to explain the abovementioned differences between the Ārāyirappaḍi and D. S. Charita if it is held that the latter was the basis of the former. We cannot possibly assign any reason for the Jīyar, a matter of fact hageologist deviating in the least from the original. The traditionalist that he was, he would not at all have strayed away from it for any reason. If on the other hand the proper relation of the two works is understood viz. that the Ārāyirappaḍi was the earlier and the basic work on which Garuḍavāhana Paṇḍita built his Kāvya, then, the difficulty vanishes. The Jīyar gave us the matter of fact history in his work. The later writer made use of the facts given therein to write a Kāvya. In so doing he naturally made certain changes. This in brief, is the most reasonable view to take regarding the two works under discussion.

We are now in a position to understand the fuller implications of the author's 'Pratigñā' or resolve in the opening ślōkās of the first Sarga.<sup>19</sup> We have already referred to the fact that he revealed therein his determination to conclude his Kāvya after depicting the life of Rāmānuja. In so doing he is seen to have declared that he felt himself unequal to the task of depicting the lives of the Divyasūris and that he merely followed the work of previous writers on the same subject. In other words we learn from the introductory portion of the first Sarga

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19. See page F. N. Ante.



that Garuḍavāhana Paṇḍita based his work on that of others long before him.

The relevant slokas may be quoted :

“Kvādivyasūri Charitam Kvacha mē manda śēmuṣi |  
 Niyantakāmmōsmi Gajam sāhasād bhisa tantunā ||  
 Prāchām praśastim prāgjanām prārthayē  
 Prākṛtāgraṇīh |  
 Pipāsōrasamāgrastam kshōdram pankōssmōsmyaham ||  
 Pūrvācāryadṛtam vṛtham Sūrīṇām adrepyaham |  
 Dyumani dyōtita pīdyōh Khadyōdēnapi bhāsate ||  
 Prachinavāchām viṣayam ṇaritam karnayāmyaham |  
 Gajāna prastitēmārgē Kimnayāti Pipīlika ||

In the above we find that he refers to the subject of the history of the Ālvārs (‘Idam Vṛttam Sūrīṇām’) as one that had been dealt with before him by a Pūrvācārya or Ācāryās (Pūrvācāryadṛtam). He says further that the same subject is dealt with by him also (Ādṛyēpyaham)<sup>20</sup>.

Now, who could have been this Pūrvācārya who wrote on the subject of the lives of the Divya-Sūris? The facts set forth above regarding the relations between the Ārayirappaḍi and the Kāvya must make it clear to us that it must have been no other than Pinbaḷagiya Jīyar himself. Those who maintain that Garuḍavāhana was a contemporary of Rāmānuja and wrote the Kāvya in the Ācārya’s own life time must find it impossible to reconcile

20. Literally ‘Ādṛyēpyaham’ means ‘Is fostered by me’ also. From the context however, the meaning must be clear. To say that the Pūrvācāryās fostered the lives of the Divyasūris is to say that they spoke and wrote about them fervently.

their opinion with the facts given in the ślōkas regarding previous writers on the subject. For, they cannot point out to anyone who had written on the subject of the Guruparamparai prior to Rāmānuja. Tradition which ascribes several works to the authorship of Ācāryas prior to Rāmānuja does not mention any such work. If there was a work of that kind older than Rāmānuja, later writers and traditionalists must certainly have made atleast passing references to it. As it is, we are unable to find any reference to a pre-Rāmānuja work on the lives of the Ālṅwars and Ācāryas.

This, in itself, must be enough for us to reject the supposed contemporaneity of Garuḍavāhana Paṇḍita with Rāmānuja. On the other hand, the date which we have assigned to this work is quite consistent with what is contained in the sloka quoted above. On the basis of accepted tradition the Jīyar's work may be assigned to about the first half of the 13th century. It is but natural that Garuḍavāhana Paṇḍita based his own work on it. The intervening period of nearly three centuries between them is a sufficiently long one. It is only in the fitness of things therefore that he refers to the prior work as that of the ancients.

Before finally concluding it is necessary to discuss some more facts and observations which would militate against the 16th century date for D.S. Charita. It is some time asserted that the Kāvya has been referred to by Vēdānta Deśika and others in their works<sup>21</sup>. If this a

21. “.....दिव्यसूरि वैभवं सदाचार्योपदेश परम्परालब्धं  
वेदान्तदेशिकादिभिः रहस्य ग्रन्थेषु प्रमाजत्वेन निर्दिष्टम् ”

Preface to the D. S. Charitam, Mysore Edn.

fact it would be impossible to assign the work to any date after Dēśika as we have done. Dēśika's date (1269 to 1369) must then fix the lower limit for the date of this Kāvya. As far as we have been able to ascertain, however, there is no such reference either to Garuḍa-vāhana Paṇḍita or to his work in the whole range of Vēdānta Dēśika's works<sup>22</sup>. This absence may even be an argument in favour of a post-Dēśika day for the D. S. Charita. But this is an argument from silence which need not be pressed far. It is enough to point out here that there are no references to the Kāvya in Dēśika's works and to that extent, therefore, our conclusion is not vitiated.

A greater problem is presented by certain MSS and almost all the printed editions of the Ārayirappaḍi which includes D.S. Charita slokas in their texts. This leads to the natural conclusion that it must have been anterior to the Ārayirappaḍi. An examination of the texts as also some of the slokas included in these editions of the Jīyar's works however, will reveal startling facts. In all the available editions of the Ārayirappaḍi, slokas not only from the D. S. Charita but also from the other works are quoted. Thus, for instance, we find two slokas from Lakshmi-Kāvya incorporated in the text dealing with the birth of Bhaṭṭar<sup>23</sup>. This Kāvya is a work of the 15th century by a certain Uttama Nambi Tirumalādhīśa and therefore its slokas could not possibly have been quoted

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22. I am deeply indebted to Sri A. V. Gopalācharya and to Mahamahopadhyaya Śēṭṭur Narasimhācharya who have assured me to that effect.

23. Ārayirappaḍi, Ed. S. Krishnamachari P. 148.

by the Jīyar. Similarly we find the 'Jayantimāla' slokas quoted. This again could not have been done by the Jīyar as these 'Jayantimāla' slokas or 'Avatāra' slokas were most probably compiled by some unknown persons after his own time. This is clear from the fact that this compilation includes the 'Avatāra' sloka of Varavara Muni also<sup>24</sup>. Again, how could the Jīyar have quoted from Vēdānta Dēśika's Sankalpa-Sūryōdaya' as is seen from the available texts?<sup>25</sup> The fact is that the original Ārayirappaḍi did not contain these slokas and that they came to be interpolated into the text gradually. Being Avatāra slokas they were added on to the original text of the Ārayirappaḍi wherever the context admitted such interpolation.<sup>26</sup>

24. पाधो भावेगतायां कलियुगशरदि श्रद्धराये शकाब्दे,  
वर्ष साधारणेऽर्के समभिगततुले वासरे तीरसंकये ।  
वारे जैवे चथुर्थ्या समजनि च तिथौ शुक्लपक्षौ सुकुर्मा  
भाजन्मूलाख्यतारे यतिपतिरपरो रम्यजामातृनामा ॥

25. Ārayirappaḍi, Life of Periyālvār, the sloka beginning with "Niyatapulagitāṅga".

26. It is a case of the text of the Ārayirappaḍi having been "corrupted" in transmission. In using a text which has been so corrupted we run the risk of attributing to the author what really comes from the copyists". There are actual cases of theories which were based on passages falsified in transmission and which collapsed as soon as the true readings were discovered or restored—Langlois and C.H. Seignobos, 'Introduction to the Study of History'.

It is possible to show the interpolatory character of the texts containing the D. S. Çarita slokas by a comparative study of the contexts in which they occur in several editions. At the outset, what strikes the critical reader is the total absence of method in regard to the manner in which the quotations are supposed to have been made. This could certainly not have been the case if the Jiyar himself had quoted these slokas from D. S. Çarita. In fairness to him it must be said that he would have followed some method in quoting them in his work. As it is we find that these slokas are thrown here and there haphazardly in the midst of the maṇipravāḷam texts. If we confine our attention only to that part of the text which contains the D. S. Çaritam slokas and compare it with that contained in the available printed editions, we will see that no two of them will be similar. In some of them the 'Avatāra' sloka taken from the Kāvya is put down next to the 'Taniyan' slokas before the maṇipravāḷam prose text itself relating to the Avatara of the Aḷvārs. Thus:

“काञ्च्यां सरसि हेमाब्जे जातं कासारयोगिनम्

कलयेयः श्रियपत्येरविन्दीपम कल्पयत् ।

मुकुन्दस्य मुखोल्लास मूलवाग्जालमूर्थितम्

मुनिमुख्यं सरोजातं मुक्तिमूलासुपास्महे ” [Taniyan sloka]

‘हेमाब्जिनी हेमसरोज ..... हेतो: (D.S. Caritham) (1)

आज्ञाधी श्रीचन्दने .... कासारयोगां (Jayantimala)(2)

என்றும் சொல்லுகிறபடியே முதலாழ்வார் மூவரிலும் வைத்துக்கொண்டு ப்ரதமம் பொய்கையாழ்வார்..... கண்ணன் வெஃகாவில் ஐப்பசி மாஸத்திலே ச்ரவண நஷத்திரத்திலே ஸ்ரீ பாஞ்சஜன்யாம்சராய் அவதரித் தருளினார்.

(Prose Text)

We find that the order is changed in other editions thus:-

‘ कान्च्यां सरसि .... मकल्पयत् (Taniyan) (1)

‘ मकुन्दस्य मुखोल्लास ... मूलमुपासहे ’

‘ आज्ञाधी श्रीचन्दने ... योगी (Jayantimala)

முதலாழ்வார் மூவரிலும் வைத்துக்கொண்டு ப்ரத  
மம் பொய்கையாழ்வார்..... கச்சியில்...  
ஐப்பசி மாஸத்திலே.....ச்ரவண நக்ஷத்ரத்திலே  
.....ஸ்ரீ பாஞ்சஜன்யாம்சமாய் அவதரித்  
தருளினார். (Prose Text)

हेमाब्जिनी ... कर्महेतोः (Prose Text)

என்று திவ்ய ஸூரி சரிதையிலே சொல்லிற்றிறே.

The interpolatory nature of these D. S. Çaritam slokas (27) in the Ārāyirappaḍi texts will be clear from the following extracts. The natural flow and regular sequence of sentences in these texts are visibly retarded by the later introduction of these slokas into the body of these texts. Without the slokas one finds that the sentences read correctly and naturally.

Referring to the avatara of Thirumaḷiṣai Ālvār the text runs thus: “ஆழ்வார் திருமழிசைப் பிரானாகிருர்... அவதரித்தருளினபடியும் வளர்ந்தருளினபடியும் எங்ஙனேயெனில்:- பார்க்கவருடைய பத்தி கர்ப்பினியாய்

27. “To interpolate is to insert into the text, words or sentences (here, slokas), which were not in authors’ MSS. Usually, interpolations are accidental due to the negligence of the copyist and are explicable as the introduction into the text of interlinear glosses or marginal notes” – Longlois & Seignobos, Introduction to the Study of History.

.....தைமாஸத்தில் மகா நக்ஷத்திரத்தில் ஸுதர்ச  
நாம்சமாய் பிண்டாக்குதியாக ப்ரஸவிக்க, ‘सागर्ममाधत्त  
महनीयतारे (4) ‘ सिध्दार्त्तिन्युणरश्मौ .... .. पवणोन्येद्युरत्त

(5) என்கிறபடியே ஸுதர்சநாம்சேந திருமழிசைப்  
பிரான் அவதரித்தாரென்று திவ்யஸூரி சரிதையிலே  
சொல்லப்பட்டதிதே.

Another extract from the text, also referring to the  
avathara of Tirumalīśai Ālvar may be given.”

ஆழ்வார் திருமழிசைப் பிரானாகிருர்.....அவதரித்  
தருளினபடியும், வளர்ந்தருளினபடியும் எங்ஙன  
யென்னில்:- பார்க்கவருடைய பத்தி கர்ப்பவதியாய்  
.....தைமாஸத்தில் மகா நக்ஷத்திரத்தில் ஸுதர்ச  
நாம்சமாய் பிண்டாக்குதியாகப் பிரஸவிக்க

(5) “सागर्म ... .. तीरे (1)

.....(1) என்கிறபடியே ஸுதர்சநாம்சரான திரு  
மழிசைப்பிரான் அவரித்தாரென்று திவ்யஸூரி சரிதை  
யிலே சொல்லப்பட்டதிதே.”

The utter confusion and disjointed nature of the senten-  
ces in the above extracts are due to the forced introduc-  
tion of Jayantīmāla and D. S. Ćaritam slokas into the  
body of the original texts by later copyists. Untampered,  
the original Ārayirappaḍi would certainly have contained  
much more regular and correct passages of dignified  
maṇipravāḷam.

It is easy to overestimate the value of Divya-Sūri  
Ćaritam as a source work for the history of Vaiṣṇavism  
as has been done so far. Very often sole reliance is  
based on this work for several important conclusions

concerning the early history of this religion. Such conclusions are bound to be modified in view of its later-day authorship and its romantic setting as a Kāvya. At best it must be considered as a historical romance and it would be imprudent to seek more history in it than what such romances can normally afford. Nevertheless, one cannot forget that it is entirely based upon and has mainly drawn from the Ārāyirappaḍi Guruparamparā Prabhāvam and as such it must be of some use to the student of history. If only the proper relationship between the two works is understood and the essentially romantic setting of the Kāvya is given its proper place beside the basic facts – which are the same in both – then it can be said to be as valuable as the earlier work itself. The author must be praised for his discretion in building upon the Ārāyirappaḍi material. He has shown commendable moderation for a Kāvya writer. It is easy to spot out the deviations from the original and therefore also to eschew all imaginary embellishments as fictions.\*

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\* The conclusions arrived at in this section regarding Divyasūri Ćaritam find ample corroboration from inscription No. 12 – “Srirangam inscription of Garudavāhana Bhaṭṭa – Saka 1415”, edited by

A. S. Ramanatha Iyer, B.A. —  
Please refer – Ep. Indica, Vol. XXIV, 1937–38.



## CHAPTER III

### ĀRĀYIRAPPAḌI GURUPARAMPARĀ PRABHĀVAM

The early source works for the history of Vaiṣṇavism are for the most part in Maṇipravāḷam, even the Sanskrit works coming later. They have been given the general name 'Guruparamparās' which embody a fairly full and accurate history of the Āḷvārs and Ācāryās. The earliest and the most important of these Guruparamparās is the Guruparamparā Prabhāvam of Pinbaḷagiya Perumāḷ Jiyar. It is more particularly known as the \*Ārāyirappaḍi Guruparamparai from the number of Grantās it is said to contain, viz., 6,000<sup>1</sup>. There are several difficulties and some of them very serious in treating this as a source work. In the first place, there are several editions of the work no two of which can be said to agree: Recourse must therefore be had to original MSS. of a reliable character, and from time to time the student has by a comparative study of these several editions and MSS. to get at particular portions of the texts to be relied on in the course of his investigation. Secondly, being a prose work it lent itself easily to later additions, interpolations and modifications from interested people, such as would not have been easily possible, and if at all only rarely, in poetical works like the Periyapurānam. Instances of such inter-

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1. A Granthā includes 32 letters including the compound letters – Samyuktākṣarās.

interpolations, some of them very glaring and extensive, may be pointed out and examined here. In almost all the editions of the *Ārayirappaḍi* as also MSS. we find a fairly large portion of the *Granthā* dealing with several unrelated topics like "The folly of Non-*Viṣṇu* worship". 'The authority and the consistency of the *Nālāyira-Divya-Prabandam* in respect of *Viṣṇu*'s *Paratatva*', 'The greatness of the *Āḷvārs*', 'the similarity of the Tamil *Prabandham* to the *Vēdas*' etc. This portion has been given a separate title "The *Divyaprabanda Pramānya Samarthanam*" in S. Krishnamacharya's editions, pp. 66-74. In the body of this portion of the work a text from the *Āçārya Hṛdayam* of *Aḷagiya Maṇavāḷapperumāḷ Nāyanār* is quoted<sup>2</sup>. This author, brother of the famous *Piḷḷai Lōkaçāryā* came long after *Pinbaḷagiya Jiyar* and hence the nature of the quotation is clear. This particular quotation from *Āçārya Hṛdayam* apart, the whole portion commencing from after the life of *Madhurakavi Āḷvār* upto the beginning of the life of *Nāthamuni* in the work bears the impress of a daring interpolation by reason of its unconnected nature. One or two minor interpolations may now be given. The short account of *Pēyaḷvār* contains a *ślōka* taken from *Vedānta Dēśika*'s *Saṅkalpa Sūryōdayam*.<sup>3</sup> It needs no pointing out that *Śrī Vedānta Dēśika* lived in the last quarter of the 13th and first half of the 14th century<sup>4</sup>, and that therefore the quotation from his work cannot

2. *Ārayirappaḍi Guruparamparā Prabhāvam* — Ed. S. Krishnamacharya, p. 72.

3. Ibid. Life of *Pēyaḷvār*.

4. *Dēśika* was born in 1269 A.D. He said to have lived 100 years.

but be a later interpolation. It may be argued that both Pinbaḷagiya Jiyar and Vēdānta Dēśika after him borrowed from a common source, in which case it cannot be on interpolation. But the meaning of the slōka is clear and as such would make us believe that it contains the words of one of the dramatist personnel of Sankalpa Sūryōdaya. It is poor compliment to the versatility of the great poet and dramatist and philosopher to attribute one of so many verses in a while drama to a borrowed source. There is nothing to show that he did not write it himself. On the other hand, it is easy to explain the quotation of the slōka in the Guruparamparā Prabhāvam texts. In this connection, we must remember that these works were handed down from generation to generation by oral tradition and expounded from time to time by the Ācārya to his disciple. In the course of such expositions, it is but natural that the later expounder should embellish the texts wherever possible with suitable quotations from other works even of later age. It is likewise natural that the diligent disciple should have taken for text what was but an illustration and embodied it in the regular work itself.

Similar might have been the quotation in this work of two slōkās from Lakshmi Kāvyaṃ referring to the birth of Parāsāra Bhaṭṭa and Parāṅkuśa and the incidental fulfilment of Rāmānuja's promise to Āḷavandār.<sup>5</sup> The

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5. It is said that Āḷavandār had undertaken to fulfil one of the desires Āḷavandār, namely, to perpetuate the memories of Vyāsa and Parāṅkuśa.

author of this kāvya is one Chakra Rāya, son of Uttama-nambi Tirumalādisā who can be assigned to about the first half of the 15th Century A. D.<sup>6</sup>

Instances like the above should not mislead us into thinking that the Ārayirappaḍi must be a late work. As pointed out already, it is an important 'Kālakshēpa Grandha' i.e., a work which every traditional scholar is said to master sitting at the feet of his Āçāryā and that selfsame tradition persists in ascribing it to the authorship of Pinbaḷagiya Perumāḷ Jiyar, the disciple of Nampīḷḷai. This is evident from the 'Taniyan' verses that every student has to recite before beginning to peruse the work. Regarding 'Taniyan' verses, in general, it may be observed that they afford us the best and surest sources of information in respect of chronology.<sup>7</sup> Works may be tampered with either wholly or in part. Sentence, may be modified here and there to suit individual prejudices, but the 'Taniyan' to a work is rarely tampered with. As such, the information they contain must be reliable for the historian.

*The date of the Work:*— The author of the Ārayirappaḍi is said to be the desciple of Nampīḷḷai the fourth in apostolic succession from Rāmānuja including Embar in the succession list of Āçārya. According to orthodox chronology Nampillai is said to have been born in Kali 4228, viz., 1147 A.D. Prabhava Kārthikai and to have lived for 105 years till 1252 A.D.<sup>8</sup> We have it further from the

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6, 7. A 'Taniyan' usually contains the name of the persons together with the name of his father or çārya.

8. 'Harisamaya Divākaram' Vol. 7. 2-3 (1930) p.10.

Ārāyirappaḍi that the Jīyar was a very old man, probably nearing his end at the time of his Ācārya's death. It must have been only a few years that he lived after his Ācārya. If we take it that he wrote the 'Guruparamparā' somewhat late in his own lifetime, we won't be far wrong in assigning the work to the first half of the 13th Century at the latest. Possibly, it was a decade or too earlier.

Thus, the earliest source work we have for the study of Vaiṣṇavism is a 13th century work in Maṇipravāḷam. Considering the subject of such holy interest as the lives of the Āḷvārs – even leaving aside those of the Ācāryās as coming nearer the times of the author during more definitely historical periods – the question may well suggest itself: Was there any anterior work on which the Jīyar would have based his account? The answer, however unaccountable it may be, is that there was none such. We have not come across any. The prevailing notion amongst scholars, is that the D. S. Ṣaritam of Garuḍavāhana Paṇḍita is a prior work on which the Jīyar based his work. Reserving a full examination of this problem, it will be sufficient to point out here that the only evidence for such a view is the quotation of D. S. Ṣaritam ślōkās in respect of the Avatāras of the Āḷvārs as found in the printed edition of the Ārāyirappaḍi now available as also in certain MSS. of the work. If such quotations alone are sufficient proof of the priority of the works from which they are quoted, then the Saṅkalpa-Sūryōdaya of Vēdānta Dēśika, the Lakṣmi Kāvya and Jayantimālā must also have been prior works. Dēśika was born only 1269 A.D. and must have therefore written his drama long after the Jīyar. The author

of the Lakshmi Kāvya, as pointed out elsewhere must be assigned to the 15th century A.D., at the earliest; and the 'Jayantimālā' is at best a compilation of Avatāra slōkās which compilation should certainly have been at least after Varavara Muni as it contains his avatāra slōka also. It would be absurd to maintain that these works were prior to the Ārāyirappaḍi.

In view of such a process of large and elaborate additions, imaginative, interpretative and wanton, to the original Ārāyirappaḍi, it is worthwhile considering for a moment the nature and extent of the original. As it is, such later-day additions to the original have led to very wrong conclusions.

It is highly probable that the Jiyar stopped with the life of Rāmānuja and that the later portions were by others who came after him and who continued his work. There is, however, nothing to prevent these continuations being treated as authoritative generally as the earlier Jiyar's work. The problem may be examined from the point of view of chronology. Tradition, as pointed out, already, says that the Jiyar was the disciple of Nampiḷḷai<sup>9</sup>. It says also that at the time of the latter's death the Jiyar was a very old man fast nearing his end so that he could not possibly have long outlived his Acarya. It is further seen that he must have been a contemporary of Nanjiyar himself and that he was far advanced in his age as he was advanced in knowledge then. There is nothing impossible in this as we can gather from the traditional accounts that both Nanjiyar

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9. Ārāyirappaḍi ed. by S. Krishnamacharya p. 236.

and Nampillai were some portions of their lives at least, contemporaries and that even in the lifetime of the former the latter had become the 'Darśana Nirvāha'ka or assumed the Acāryāship<sup>10</sup>.

Could it be possible, then, that the Jīyar wrote about his own contemporaries? It is highly improbable that a traditionalist like himself would have done so and much more so because they were not only his contemporaries but also his acaryas in the direct line of apostolic succession from Rāmanuja. Sheer respectfull sentiment and ordinary sense of humility must have stood in the way of the Jīyar attempting their biography. He would not have thought of it. Some portions of the text dealing with the lives of Nanjīyar and Nampillai reveal the improbability of the Jīyar's authorship of them. Firstly, there are several references in those portions to the author himself. These may be taken up one by one and examined: The name 'Pinbalāgiya Perumāḷ Jīyar' occurs for the first time in the following passages:-

“நஞ்சீயர் பக்கலிலும் நம்பிள்ளை பக்கலிலே ஸர்வார்த்தங்களும் வந்து குடிபுகுருகையாலே பிள்ளையும் தீபாதுத்பன்ன ப்ரதீபம் போலே தர்சனம் நிர்வஹிக்கக் கண்டு ஜீயரும் க்ருதார்த்தராயிருக்கும் காலத்தில், நம்பிள்ளை ஸ்ரீபாதத்திலே பெரியவாச்சான் பிள்ளை, வடக்குத் திருவீதிப்பிள்ளை, பின்பழகிய பெருமாள் ஜீயர், ஈயுண்ணி மாதவப் பெருமாள் முதலான அநேக ஸ்ரீவைஷ்ணவர்கள் ஆச்ரயித்து க்ருதார்த்தரானார்கள்”

It will be seen that in the above passage the reference to the Jiyar is of the nature of a reference to a third person by the author than to the author himself. The passage immediately following the above will make this point clear.

“இவர்களிலே பின்பழகிய பெருமாள் ஜீயர் ஊனுமுறக்கமுமின்றியே பிள்ளை திருவடிகளிலே வழி விலாவடிமை செய்து வாழ்ந்தருளுங் காலத்திலே ஒரு கால் திருமேனி பாங்கின்றியே கண்வளர்ந்தருளுகிற போது தமக்கு அந்தரங்கரான ஸ்ரீவைஷ்ணவர்களை அழைத்து ‘அடியேன் இப்போது திருவடிசாராமல் இங்கே இன்னும் சிறிது நாளிருக்கும்படி பெருமாள் ஸன்னதியிலே சென்று ஏழையேதலனும் ஆழியெழச் சங்கும் விண்ணப்பம் செய்து ப்ரபத்தி பண்ணி வேண்டிக் கொள்ளுங்கோள்’ என்ன அவர்களும் அப்படியே செய்து நிற்க ஜீயருக்குத் திருமேனி பண்டுபோல் பாங்காயிற்று.

Apart from the third personal nature of the references to the Jiyar in this passage, the free and frequent use of such highly formal terms as “திருமேனி பாங்கின்றியே கண்வளர்ந்தருளுகிறபோது” must be enough to condemn the belief that the Jiyar himself was the author of these passages. The narrative continues:-

“இதைக்கேட்ட ஸ்ரீவைஷ்ணர்கள், நம்பிள்ளை ஸன்னதியிலே சென்று தண்டன் ஸமர்ப்பித்து ஞானவ்ருத்தருமாய் வயோவ்ருத்தருமாயிருக்கும்’ பின்பழகிய பெருமாள் ஜீயர் இப்படிச் செய்தார். இது இவர் ஸ்வரூபத்துக்குச் சேருமோ’ என்று விண்ணப்பஞ் செய்ய பிள்ளையும் ..... ஜீயர் திருமுக மண்டலத்தைப் பார்த்துச் சிரித்து, இவை உம்முடைய நினைவுக்கு



ஓக்குமோ? என்ன?.....திருமஞ்சனச் சாலைக்கு எழுந்தருளி தேவரீர் திருமஞ்சனங் கண்டருளித் தூய உடையாடைத் திருவுத்தரீயஞ் சாற்றியருளி உலாவி யருளும்போது குறுவேர்ப்போடே கூடின திருமுகமண்டலச் செவ்வியையும், அடியேன் சுற்றிச் சுழற்றிப் ப்ருமாறுகிற கைங்கர்யத்தையும் விட்டு அடியேனுக்குப் பரமபதத்துக்குப் போக இச்சையாயிருந்ததில்லை..... என்று விண்ணப்பஞ் செய்தார். இதைக் கேட்டருளிப் பிள்ளையும் முதலிகளும் ‘இவ்வுடம்போடே இவ்வைச்வர்யம் கூடுவதே’ என்று மிகவும் திருவுள்ளமுகந்தருளினார்கள்.\*

While we see a repetition of such respectful and formal references to the Jīyar in this passage, we also see that it is a glowing account of a very memorable episode in his life – a fit subject for narration only by his successors and not by himself. In fact, we find many more such references to the incidents in the life of the Jīyar in the course of the Nanjīyar and Nampīlīai Vaibhavams. The impression that the passages and the old narrative create is clear and unmistakable and it is idle to argue yet, merely on the basis of the available editions of the Ārayirappaḍi that the Jīyar could have been the author of the Guruparamparā after Ramanuja.

It is very regrettable that we have not got reliable editions of this important source work for early Śrī Vaiṣṇava history. There are as many as six editions including the latest by S. Krishnamacharya. The earliest in the field seems to be in the edition brought out by Āsūri Rāmaūjāchārya in the year 1878 (Madras Guardian Press). One of these editions is remarkable

\*Ibid PP. 236-237

as the very type of bad editorship. In this edition, while the Maṇipravāḷam text is reproduced as it is in the Telugu Script, the headlines of the Chapters and explanatory notes are in that language itself. This, however, is not the major defect of this edition. What is more serious and what reveals an utter lack of appreciation of the editor's task is that it contains not only the lives of Nanjīyar and Nampillai after Bhāshyakāra (Ramanuja) and Bhaṭṭar, but also the lives of Peria-Āchchān Piḷḷai and Vaḍakkut-Tiruvīdippiḷḷai. Even the smallest acquaintance with tradition should have prevented this blunder. Peria-Āchchān Piḷḷai and Vaḍakkut - Tiruvīdippillai must have lived long after the demise of Pinbaḷagia Jīyar, the latter having died very probably immediately after Nampiḷḷai. In fact, it had been calculated and given to us that Vaḍakkut-Tiruvīdippiḷḷai lived for full 72 years after his predecessor, Nampiḷḷai. When such is the case, it is impossible to conceive how the Jīyar could ever have attempted and completed the biography of Vaḍakkut-Tiruvīdippiḷḷai and Peria-Āchchān. It is difficult to see how that frequent quotations from Varavara Muni's Tamil work, the 'Upadēśa-Rattina-Mālai' and those portions of the text dealing with the lives of Peria-Āchchān and Vaḍakkut-Tiruvīdippiḷḷai could have escaped the editor's attention. Surely, the Jīyar could not have quoted from a work of the 15th century<sup>11</sup>. The error seems to have originated in some such way as this. The Guruparamparās state that the Jīyar was the disciple of Nampiḷḷai along with Vaḍakkut-Tiruvīdippiḷḷai, Peria-Āchchān and others.

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11. Ar. Guru. Prabhāvam ed. Āśuri Ramanujacharya 1880. p. 376.

Having been a contemporary of these, it was perhaps thought that he could have been the author of their biographies. But the fact seems to have been forgotten that he was a contemporary of the two Acharyas only for a very short time and that he died long before them and therefore could not have written their biographies.

This lack of critical scholarship and proper editorial sense seems to have continued though to a lesser degree in successive editions of the *Ārāyirappaḍi*. If only as an instance in point, we may take up the edition of *Āsūri Rāmanujāchārya* (Madras Śrīnithi Press) 1880. We find that this is an improvement over the previous editions of the work in that it gives a bibliography at the end of it. While being very useful generally, it lacks thoroughness on the part of the editors. The D. S. Charita sloka mentioning the avatāra of Tondaraḍippoḍi *Āḷvār* is put down in the bibliography as the Tanian sloka of the *Āḷvār*. The same has been said also of the Jayantī-Mālā sloka on the same Subject<sup>11</sup>. Further down, the Jayantī-Mālā sloka mentioning the avatāra of Tiruppāṇ-*Āḷvar* has been called a sloka from the Kāvya. It may also be noted in passing that in this bibliography the Jayanthī-Mālā slokas have been simply styled 'Munnōrmōḷi'<sup>12</sup>. Some of them have been put down as slokas from D. S. Charita 12.

With regard to the body of the work itself it is seen to stop with the life of Nampiḷlai. This Ācārya's demise is not mentioned and it deals with only a part of his life. Evidently, the author was careful enough not to commit the same blunder as his predecessors, but he

12. Ibid. p. 373; 2. Ibid. p. 395.

too has been led away by the Jīyar's contemporaneity with his Ācārya into the belief that he (the Jīyar) could have very well been the latter's biographer. Again the editor seems to have lost sight of the narrative so full of incidents connected with the Jīyar himself which should have made anyone think twice before attributing these portions to him. This aspect of the question has been explained already and does not need repetition here.

There is nothing particular to be said about the remaining editions, nearly all of them following the older ones. They all stop with the life of Nampiḷai, that particular portion which deals with the grant of "Īḍu Muppattārayirappaḍi" by the Ācāryā to "Īyunnī Mādhavaperumāḷ. There are no great differences worth noticing here. The wonder is that there have been so many successive editions without any appreciable improvement from one to another. All the editing that has so far been done seems to consist in the mere transcription of palm leaf material into print.

If then, it is held that the Ārayirappaḍi must have stopped with the life of Rāmanuja, what becomes of the rest of the narrative containing the biographies of Bhattar and Nanjīyar and others upto Varava Muni? Having admitted that they also embodied genuine tradition, we must conclude that they were written by people who came after Pinpaḷagiya Jīyar. In other words, it must be clear that there were several Guruparamparā prabhāvams besides the Ārayirappaḍi. Is there any evidence to support this inference? There is: The author of "Yatīndra-Pravaṇa-Prabhāvam" in the introduction to his work called the "Avatārika" says as follows:—

பதியான ஸர்வேச்வரன் ஸம்ஸாரி சேதநோஜ்ஜீவன காமனாய்க்கொண்டு கலிகாலத்தில் ஸ்ரீ பராங்குச, பர கால பட்ட நாதாதிகளான ஆழ்வார்களையும் நாதயா முனயதிவராதிகளான ஆசார்யர்களையும் அவதரிப்பித் தருளி தந்முகேந லோகத்தை ரக்ஷித்தருளினபடியை பின்புள்ளாரும்றிந்து உஜ்ஜீவிக்கும்படி முன் பு ள் ள ஆசாரியர்கள் குருபரம்பரா ப்ரபாவ முகங்களான ப்ர பந்தங்களாலே ப்ரதிபாதித்து உபகரித்தருளினார்கள்.” Further regarding his own work Piḷḷai Lōkan Jīyar, the author of “Yatindra-Pravaṇa-Prabhāvam” says: இது தான் பூர்வோக்த க்ரந்தங்களுக்கு சேஷமானதாயிருக் கும் (2). It is evident from the above passages that the lives of the Āḷvārs and the Ācāryās have been dealt with by more than one author. The use of the plurals “குரு பரம்பரா ப்ரபாவ முகங்களாலே ப்ரபந்தங்களுக்கு, Etc., clearly indicates the existence of other Guruparam- paras besides that of Pinpaḷagiya Jīyar.

Evidence is forthcoming from another source also. The Periya-Tirumuḍi-Aḍaivu mentions the name of a work “Guruparamparā Prabhāvam” among the works of one Iḷambiliṣippīḷḷai, a disciple of Vankipurattachchi. As the author mentions also the Guruparamparā Pra- bhāvam as the only work of Pinpaḷagiya Jīyar, there is no mistaking the fact that two different works of the same name were referred to by him.

There is a work called the Pannīrāyirappaḍi Guru- paramparai also attributed to Pinpaḷagiya Jīyar. It is unlikely, that he set himself to the task of elaborating his own Ārāyirappaḍi into another separate work. He must be deemed to have written either the one or the other and there can be no mistake about his having been

the author of the *Ārāyirappaḍi*. Misguided enthusiasm, false imagination and unbridled fancy have contributed to the elaboration of the *Pannīrāyirappaḍi*. Its style has nothing of the vigour and freshness of the *Ārāyirappaḍi*. The attempt at imitating the *Maṇipravāḷam* of the original has demonstrably failed.

A critical estimate of Pinbaḷagiya Jīyar's work must necessarily be based on the hypothesis set forth above, namely, that the author must have concluded with the life of Rāmānuja. If this is conceded, much of the criticisms on the inconsistencies and the value of work will have to be revised. The inconsistencies and the chronological inaccuracies that have been sometimes pointed out in the *Arāyirappaḍi*<sup>13</sup> are all with reference to accounts of the lives of Nanjīyar and Nampīḷḷai after Rāmānuja.

The *Ārāyirappaḍi Guruparamparā Prabhāvam* of Pinbaḷagiya Jīyar is the earliest extant work on the lives of the Āḷvārs and Ācāryās. Considering the fact that tradi-

13. It is difficult to believe that the author of the *Ārāyirappaḍi* intended it to be sectarian work for the reason that sects had not yet come into being in his day. It may also be noted that the facts mentioned by Professor V. Rangacharya to show the sectarian character of the work relate only to the lives of Nanjīyar and Nampīḷḷai after Ramanuja and Bhaṭṭar. If any thing, this should support the view that the Jīyar's work stopped with the life of Ramanuja (the life of Bhaṭṭar of course being included in it.) The chronological inconsistencies pointed out by him also refer to the post-Ramanuja *Guru Parampara*.

See Prof. V. Rangacharya, the successors of Ramanuja, J.R.A.S. P. 112 and following.

tion is the most fruitful source of information for our subject the value of this Maṇirpravāḷam work must be great indeed. One cannot deny that the author must have largely drawn upon his imagination to picture to posterity the lives of the Aḷvārs, centuries prior to him. Nevertheless, he can be said to have preserved what had been transmitted through generations of time as genuine tradition. That part of the Work which deals with the lines of the Acaryas from Nathamuni to Ramanuja can be deemed to be more reliable from the point of view of the historian. For the author must have been on surer grounds when he wrote about their lives, coming as they did well within historic times. From Nathamuni onwards the Sri Vaiṣṇavās claim to have an unbroken line of Ācāryic succession. The accounts of the doings of these Ācāryās must have been transmitted though not preserved in works of history through succeeding generations of master and disciple for the guidance of the common folk. The value of the Arayirappadi must be greater still from this point of view if, as is generally believed, it included the lives of Nanjīyar and Nambiḷai also. For then, we must look at that part of the work as a record of contemporary events. That it is not a sectarian work enhances its value as a source work for the history of vaiṣṇavism in the Tamil land. Though apt to be legendary for the most part in the early portions, it is so to a comparatively lesser extent in the later portions, and it is singularly devoid of the extravagances of later Vaiṣṇava literature.

## CHAPTER IV

### III. PERIYA TIRUMUDI AḌAIVU,\*

Among the professedly historical works of the Śrī Vaiṣṇavas the importance of several treatises called the 'Tirumuḍi Aḍaivu' is next only to that of the *Guruparamparā Prabhāvams*. As the very name implies each 'Tirumuḍi-Aḍaivu' is a compilation giving the geneology and succession list of the Āḷvārs and Āchāryās. Wherever possible the date of birth together with Tanian slokas of the several Āchāryās and the names of their works is generally given. In this way they serve as excellent handbooks of reference for the history of the Śrī Vaiṣṇavas and their literature.

We are concerned here with only two of such genealogical lists, one short and the other long, and therefore called the Śirīya (short) and the Periya (long) 'Tirumuḍi-Aḍaivu'. All that we need to know about the former is that it begins with the line of Ācāryic descent from Viṣṇu (Nārāyaṇa) and carries it on to Varavaramuni and his eight chief disciples.<sup>1</sup> The details given about individual persons are

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\*. See Triennial catalogue of Sanskrit MSS for a short account of the work. The printed edition of of Periya-Tirumuḍi-Aḍaivu which I consulted clearly ascribes it to the authorship of Kandāḍai Nāyan. I have not been able to get at the work of the same name by Appillai to which Prof. V. Rangācharya refers in his Article on 'Successors of Ramanuja' (J.R.A.S.)

1. See descriptive catalogue of Tamil NSS Vol: 2 PP. 992-993 (1926).



meagre, the author evidently having contented himself with merely showing the unbroken continuity of the Guruparamparai or the line of succession of Ācarayās from Śrīman Nārāyaṇa.

The 'Periya Tirumudi Aḍaivu' is more important from the point of view of traditional chronology. At the outset the fivefold manifestation of Śrīman Nārāyaṇa in the 'Para', 'Vyūha', 'Vibhava', 'Antaryāmi' and Archā forms are briefly set forth and then the genealogy starts with the mention of Śrī Ranganātha as the first and foremost Ācārya. His asteriam, His titles along with many other names of his and his Tanian are all given. Next in the Ācāryic line of succession comes Śrīranga-Nāchchiyār, the consort and disciple of Ranganātha. The same details as before are given and Sēnai Mudaliār (Sanskrit Viṣvaksēna) is mentioned next to her. Declaring that the ten Ālvārs were collectively his disciples, it proceeds to give details of their Nakashatra and date of birth together with their works and such other information individually. Nammālvār is the fourth and Madhurakavi the last of the Ālvārs mentioned after which we come well within historic times and the line of Ācāryās commences with Nāthamuni. The continuity in Ācāryic succession is sought to be maintained by connecting with Nammālvār as his Āchāryā. It is but natural that from this point onward notes on individual Āchāryās become comparatively fuller though yet succinct. The genealogy is brought down to Ramanuja and continued there after through all the ramifications of the later Śrī Vaisṇava Guruparamaparās upto the times of the

Seventh Jiyar of the Ahōbila Mutt. It is not as if all the various Ācārya Pramparās upto that point are given without any omission. It is clear, however, that all the important genealogies are there, the latest being that of the Ahōbila Mutt. As the enumeration of this genealogy stops with the Seventh Jiyar of the line and as he is the latest Ācārya in point of time mentioned in the work, we can take it that the author of the 'Tirumuḍi Aḍaivu' must have lived sometime after him.

It is easy to get a rough estimate of this Seventh Ahōbila Jiyar, which fixes the upper limit for the date of the author of the 'Tirumuḍi Aḍaivu'. It is on record that Shaṣṭa Parāṅkuśa, the sixth of the line was the contemporary and agent of Aliya Rāma Rāya and Sadāśiva Mahā Rāya of Vijayanagar and that he was managing the affairs of the shrine at Ahōbilam as its guardian. In a Sanskrit treatise called the 'Satsampradāya-Muktāvali' he is definitely stated to have been a contemporary of Sadāśiva. There is much more pointed reference to this Ācārya under the name 'Parāṅkuśa - Vaṇ - Śaṭagōpa - Jiyyangāru' in an inscription dated Saka 1477 during the reign of 'Vīra-Pratāpa-Vīrasadāśiva-Mahārāya'. Vaṇ Śaṭagōpaswāmī, the seventh of the line appears to have been a contemporary of the next Vijayanagara Monarch-Ranga -1, whom he is said to have approached for help in the restoration of the Ahōbilam temple. The inscription of Śaka 1506 referring to this event says that the request was acceded to and the temple restored to its

former glory<sup>3</sup>. It is clear then that the seventh Jiyar must be assigned to the last quarter of the 16th Century, there being clear and exact evidence of his activity in A.D. 1584.

In view of the foregoing, the statement of the 'Tirumuḍi Aḍaivu' itself that it was the work of Kandāḍai Nayan must be deemed unreliable. Being the son of Kōil Kandāḍai Aṇṇan he clearly belongs to the second generation after Varavara Muni. Having died in 1467 A. D.<sup>4</sup> he outlives the latter only by 23 years and he could certainly not have been the author of a work containing the genealogy of the Ahōbila Mutt running into much later times after him. The fact seems to be this. The 'Tirumuḍi-Aḍaivu' must have been a late work by some one who sought to give it sanctified traditional authority by putting it in the name of a traditional Ācāryā like Kandāḍai Nayan. He being the last Ācāryā to be mentioned in the work itself, it was perhaps easy to ascribe the authorship to him. Thus the very contents of the work belie the declaration as to its authorship at the close.

It is very interesting to note that this 'Thirumuḍi Aḍaivu, the entire work with practically no alteration is embodied in a late work of about the 18th Century called the Acārya - Sūkti - Mukṭavaḷi'.<sup>5</sup> It

3. Dr. S. K. Ayyangar 'sources of Vijayanagar History' PP. 233-234.

4. Hari Samaya Divākaram - Article on 'Kamba Rāmāyanam Arangēṇṇa kalam' Vol. I No. 2-3, P-23. (1930). See also the 'Tirumudi Adaivu' of the Kōil Kandāḍai Aṇṇan Family.

5. R. Venkaṭeśwar & Co., Madras (1911) Publication.

is a telugu work attempted to be written in classical style by one Nambūri – Kēśavacārya apparently intended to cater to the needs of the large body of Vaiṣṇavās in the Andhra Country. It is in the fifth chapter of the third book purporting to narrate the Guruparamparās that we come across the aforesaid incorporation of the ‘Periya-Tirumuḍi Aḍaivu’ text. Not even the sequence has been altered in the process of incorporation which makes it difficult for the reader to determine which is the earlier work of the two – the ‘Tirumudi Aḍaivu’ or the ‘Achārya-Sūkti-Muktāvaḷi’. The difficulty to be sure is enhanced by the fact that the authorship of the former itself has to remain undecided owing to the anachronism pointed out above. A careful examination of the Telugu text betrays here and there, in its translations of the ‘Tirumuḍi-Aḍaivu’ proper names, its true nature as a copy from the Tamil original. The names of several Acaryas are given in such hopelessly unintelligible forms as would unmistakably point out the nature of the Telugu work. Indeed the one instance even if it be the only one, where the mother of Pīḷḷai Lōkacāryā is put down in Telugu as ‘Tiruttāyar Śrīranga Nāchchiār’ exactly as it appears in the Tamil work must enable us to decide that the fifth chapter of the third book is no other than the entire ‘Tirumuḍi Aḍaivu’ incorporated wholesale into the work.

The date of Nambūri Kēśavācharya can be approximately fixed. From the closing chapters of his work where he gives an account of himself it appears that he must have lived during the times of the Navabs of the Carnatic – Cir. 1800 A.D. Hence one thing is clear.

Though Kandāḍai Nāyan could never have been the author of Peria-Tirumuḍi Aḍaivu and even though it must be ascribed to some unknown author later than Cir. 1500 A.D. it must certainly have been written before 'Ācārya Sūkti Mukṭāvaḷi'. The later work fixes the lower limit unmistakably.

The value of 'Periya-Tirumuḍi Aḍaivu' for Pre-Rāmānuja Vaiṣṇavism must be limited indeed in view of the fact that it is a very late work embodying tradition perhaps but vitiated to a large extent. It gives fanciful dates for the birth of the Āḷvārs, the basis for which is hard to ascertain. It is nevertheless an excellent handbook of reference for the history of post-Rāmānuja Vaiṣṇavism.

## CHAPTER V

### IV. PRAPANNĀMṚTAM

Of the two Sanskrit sources available for the history of Vaiṣṇavism in South India dealing with the lives of the Āḷvārs and Ācāryas exclusively, Prapannāmṛtam is next only to Divya-Sūri Caritam in importance and not very far removed from it in point of time. In a sense, however, it may be considered more reliable than the Kāvya in that it has strictly followed the Ārāyirappaḍi almost as a literal translation of that work. If Garuḍa-vāhana Pnāḍita made use of the Ārāyirappaḍi material to develop a beautiful Kāvya, Anantārya the author of Prapannāmṛtam did the same to produce a purāṇic account of the lives of the Āḷvārs and Ācāryas. The style that he has adopted is similar to that found in the Purāṇas, the story being narrated in the form of a dialogue between Bhaṭṭar and Vēdāntin (Tamil-Nanjīyar).

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1. I have consulted the Bombay Śrī Venkatēśwara Press Edin. of this work in Devanāgarī (dated Śaka 1829 - viz 1907 A. D.) which contains 126 cantos. Referring to the same work Dr. S. K. Ayyangar observes: "This work of 125 cantos is not yet available (1919) to the scholarly public as there has so far been only a Telugu edition which is out of Print. Entire MSS seem so far difficult of getting....." - 'Sources of Vijayanagar History'. P34-F. N.

This work of 126 cantos<sup>1</sup> starts with a description of Śrī Vaikunttha wherein the Lord is said to have discussed with Ādi Śeṣa the reason for the birth of Rāmānuja on earth. Having started in this usual purāṇic way the author continues the life of the great Ācārya in all its detail through as many as 68 chapters. It is interesting to note that the 64th Chapter incorporates an eulogy on Rāmānuja called the 'Aṣṭōttaranāma Stotram' supposed to have been composed by Āndhra-Pūrṇa. The 69th, 70th, and the 71st Chapters are devoted to the life of Bhaṭṭar and the story of his contest with Nanjiyar. Then what appears to be an interlude is comprised in three or four chapters wherein the sanctity of the Drāvida-Vēdas and the lives of Gōḍa and the Pūrvācāryas are given in a summarised way. Then commences the story of the lives of the Ālvārs and Ācāryas as if narrated by Bhaṭṭar to Vēdāntin. In fact from chapter 75 onwards the second part of the Prapannāmṛtam may be said to begin. We have again a description of Śrī Vainkunṭha and a conversation between Śrī Lakṣmi and Śrī Vaikunṭha nātha (Mahāvisnu) introducing the lives of the saints. The life of Śrī Śaṭhakōpa is given last in chapters 103-105<sup>2</sup>. Nāthamuni's life is given in 3 chapters - 106-108 - after which the lives of succeeding Ācāryas, Kṛṣṇa, Puṇḍarikākṣa, Yāmuna etc. are narrated<sup>3</sup>. The story of the last names runs through full 4 chapters. Chapters 115 to 116 are devoted to the lives of the Ācāryas of Rāmānuja and Bhaṭṭa and with these the

2. In this Anantārya has strictly followed Pin-baḷagiya Jiyar unlike Garuḍavāhana Paṇḍita.

3. Uyyakkonḍār, Maṇakkāl Nambī, Ālavandār are the Tamil counterparts of Kṛṣṇa, Puṇḍarikākṣa and Yāmuna respectively.

second part of the work may be said to close. The dialogue form of narration is thenceforward discontinued evidently because the later chapters contain no regular life-history of the Ācāryas as in the earlier portions of the work, but only expositions of stray topics like the 'Bhagavad Viṣaya Sampradāya' (Ch. 119). Chapter 120 narrates the birth of Lōkacārya and the history of the Śrī Bhāṣya, incidentally mentioning also the great and noble part played by Vēdānta Deśika in helping to preserve the great work for future times. An account of Varavara Muni as also of his eight chief disciples is given in chapters 121 and 122. The last four chapters together may be said to contain a detailed account of the family of the Tātācāryas the descendants of Śrī-Sāila-Pūrṇa and of their exploits in the Vijayanagara Court.

From the foregoing summary of the contents of the work it will be seen that it deals in the main with the lives of the Āḷvārs, and Ācāryas beginning with Nāthamuni and ending with Rāmānuja; but then, to the strictly chronological mind it might seem a little queer that Anantārya should have given the life of Rāmānuja first and then only that of the Divyasūris (Āḷvārs). One is also struck by the fact that the author stops giving the regular history of the Ācāryas after Bhaṭṭar and that stray episodes only are given in the lives of Piḷḷai Lōkacārya Vēdānta Deśika and Varavara Muni in the later chapters. Above all one would surely like to know why the genealogy of the Tātācāryas should be given at all in the closing chapters of the book.

A close study of the Prapannāmṛtam will enable us to understand the significance of the above setting and the



scheme of the author. His object avowedly was to give the lives of the Divya-Sūris, and the Ācāryas ending with Rāmānuja. It is clear that he had the Ārayirappaḍi as his basis for that. Having determined on a purāṇic setting for the whole work, he naturally altered strict chronology to suit his purpose. In what may be termed the first part of the work he gave out the life of Rāmānuja included in which was the life of Bhaṭṭar also. Thereafter he hit upon the convenient device of a dialogue between Bhaṭṭar and his disciple Vēdāntin to introduce and narrate the lives of the Āḷvars in what easily forms the second part of the work. Bhaṭṭar is naturally made to stop with his narration of the life of Rāmānuja. It is natural to expect such a later-day author as Anantārya to have continued the lives of the Ācāryas even after Rāmānuja. The purāṇic style could have been sustained by introducing two other persons real or imaginary to discourse on them. We find, however, that the dialogue form stops with the life of Rāmānuja and is discontinued thereafter, thereby clearly showing that it was not the intention of the author to continue the regular history of the succeeding Ācāryas. Vēdānta Dēśika comes in for mention because of the memorable episode of his life in which he is connected with the preservation of the Śrī Bhāṣya;—the main theme being the elucidation of the Śrī Bhāṣya-Paramapara. In much the same way, the short account of Varavara-muni and his disciples must be deemed only incidental to the narration of the Guru-paramparā to which the author himself belonged and which he was naturally anxious to give. In fact, he gives rather elaborately the genealogy of the family of the Tātācāryas and an account of their doings in the concluding chapters of the work.

While the D. S. Charitam of Garuḍavāhana is a close adaptation of the Ārayirappaḍi, the Prapannāmṛtam as observed at the outset is almost a literal translation of it. Apart from stray instances of descriptive elaboration of Gods and incidents<sup>4</sup>; the whole of the work clearly translates the original work of Pinbaḷaḡya Jīyar, embodying wholesale the Sanskrit and Manipravāḷam phrases—very often even sentences—in its easy flowing ‘Anuṣṭubh’ slokas. The sequence of the narrative is exactly the same in both; and what is most striking is that the author of Prapannāmṛtam not only borrows wholesale the Ārayirappaḍi quotations and incorporates them in his own work but also takes care to see that they are set down in the same order.<sup>5</sup> As in the case of D. S. Charitam, forced and sometimes mistaken Sanskritisation of the original proper names and such other tell-tale renderings of the original Ārayirappaḍi texts will amply bear out the fact of translation. It is very easy to pick out corresponding extracts, chapter, by chapter from the two works and show that the one is an exact translation and a reproduction in Sanskrit of the other. The opening chapter in Pinbaḷaḡyis Jīyar’s work describing Sri Vāikunṭha and the 75th chapter of Prapannāmṛtam also devoted to the same subject afford two such strikingly interesting extracts from this point of view.

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4. A few instances may be given. The description of the God of Tirukkōvalūr who revealed Himself to the Mudal-Aḷwars. The viles of Kanankāḡi to seduce Bhaktisārā.

5. See chapter 76 & 77 and the corresponding portions in the Ārayirappaḍi.

We saw how the Sanskrit work is a literal translation of the Ārayirappaḍi. We also saw how it stops with the life of Rāmānuja. Now, the question arises, “Why did Anantārya, a late writer, content himself with depicting only that portion as his main theme and stop there?” We may be justified indeed if we answer as in the case of D. S. Charitam, that Post-Rāmānuja Vaiṣṇava history was not a fit subject for narration and that therefore, he left it out of account. But this explanation will be inadequate particularly in view of the fact that the setting and the nature of Prapannāmṛtam could have easily admitted of the continuation of the narrative contained in the work. We cannot also forget the fact that the main theme of the work and its major portion is an exact reproduction of the original. The inference therefore suggests itself very strongly that the original work of Pinbaḷagiya Jīyar must have also stopped with the life of Rāmānuja.

The suggestion has been made elsewhere on an examination of the internal evidence of the Ārayirappaḍi itself<sup>6</sup> and we see it confirmed now from another source.

Another fact also emerges from a careful study of Prapannāmṛtam. The author quotes D. S. Charitam ślokas and actually names the Kāvya in several places in the work<sup>7</sup>. We are then in a position to fix the date of Prapannāmṛtam as the lower limit for the date of Garuḍa-vāhana, the author of D. S. Charitam. The date of

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6. See the section on Ārayirappaḍi Guruparam-parā Prabhāvam, Ante.

7. Prapannāmṛtam – Bombay edn. p. 249 & 315.

Vēdānta Dēśika may be said to fix the upper limit as he has not referred either to Garuḍavāhana or to his Kāvya in his work. The fixing up of the age of Garuḍavāhana within these broad limits agrees with the dates assigned to him elsewhere on other evidence<sup>8</sup>.

The date of Prapannāmṛtam may now be considered. The author gives us a clear lead in this matter in the last chapter of his work. Himself a descendant of Āndhra-Pūrṇa<sup>9</sup>; he categorically states that he is the disciple of a certain Ranganātha<sup>10</sup>; the grandson of Lakṣmīkumāra Tātācārya<sup>11</sup> who was a contemporary of the Vijayanagar monarch Venkaṭapati after Rāmarāya. It is said that this Tātācārya officiated in the Abhiṣeka ceremony on the coronation of Venkaṭapati Dēvarāya (1586 to 1614) and it is probable that he outlived his royal patron. It is on record also that he spent the last years of his life at Kāñci. Allowing for three generations of father, son and grand-son, we won't be far wrong if we assign Ranganātha to Cir 1650 A. D. Within broad limits, we can also assign Anantārya, his disciple to about the same period. It becomes clear then that Prapannāmṛtam is a work of the latter half of the 17th century.

8. See the section on D. S. Charitam-ante.

9. See chapter 126 Prapannāmṛtam. Bombay Edition.

10.                   -do-                   -do-                   -do-

11. Also called 'Kōṭikanyakādānam Tātācārya'. The editor of the 'Tirupati Dēvasthānam inscriptions' would suggest the possibility of this and 'Panchamatha Bhanjanam Tātācārya' being one and the same persons. Refer also T. A. Gopinātha Rao for a discussion on this and other facts concerning the Tātācharyas (Ep. Indic Vol. )

It remains now to estimate the value of the work as a source work for Vaiṣṇava history. One would expect it to be of as much value as the 'Ārayirappaḍi' itself, being a reproduction of that work. But curiously enough the author has added details in regard to the dates of births of the Alvārs not found in the original. It is not possible to say with any definiteness how he got at the cyclic and the Kali years for these Avatāras. May it be that he got the information from the 'Jayantīmālā' compilation? Even then it can be said to embody tradition only in its very late stages. The few additions made from the point of view of mere story interest serve only to lessen its historical value for Pre-Rāmānuja Vaiṣṇavism. For the later history of the religion, however, it may be of some more use. For, the later portions of the work contain some major synchronisms as between Doḍḍayācārya and Tātācārya which will be useful for the reconstruction of the religious history of the period. Incidentally, the work gives useful information about Vijayanagar kings.<sup>12</sup>

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12. See (1) Sources of Vijayanagara History, Ed. by Dr. S. K. Ayyangar and (2) Further Sources of Vijayanagara History, Vols. I & II by Dr. N. Venkataramanayya for detailed information with relevant texts from the Prapannāmṛtam as a source work for the political history of Vijayanagar.

Refer also to the Article on "Prapannāmṛtam as source-work for Vijayanagar History by Dr. B. V. Ramanujam"—Paper submitted to the Seminar on Vijayanagar History organised by the Karnatak University on Nov., 6th, 1970 to be published by the Karnatak University.

## CHAPTER VI

### APPENDIX I

#### DIVYASŪRI CARITAM QUOTATIONS IN THE ĀRĀYIRAPPAḌI GURUPARAMPARĀ PRABHĀVAM

Interpolations are the bane of all religious literature. It is perhaps in the nature of things that it is generally so. The Ārāyirappaḍi Guruparamparā Prabhāvam of Piṇbaḷagiya Jiyar is no exception to this general tendency, if not the rule. A careful scrutiny will reveal that it contains several interpolations ranging in extent from a śloka or two to wholesale passages of Maṇipravāḷam text, sometimes running to several pages of printed matter. Confining ourselves to the nature of D. S. Charita ślōkās in the work, we are at once struck by this fact namely, that they are all concentrated in the early portion of it dealing with the lives of the Āḷvārs. We find also that they are all ślokas concerning the avatāras of these saints introduced to supplement the Maṇipravāḷam text referring to the same. In view of the fact that both Ārāyirappaḍi and the D. S. Charitam deal with the same subject matter in very nearly the same manner, it is natural to expect the quotations from the Kāvya to be more varied and distributed all over the prose work rather than isolated in only a part of it. In other words, it is reasonable to expect that the author of the Guruparamparā could very well have drawn from the Kāvya more profusely and in very many contexts.

As it is, however, the isolated nature of these quotations betrays their later introduction into the text. There is, however, one single exception to be noted and examined. We find three ślokaś of the Kāvya quoted in certain MSS and printed editions of the Ārayirappaḍi text giving an account of the last days of Rāmaṇuja. The relevant portions of it are given below.

“....உடையவரும், வாரிகோள்! முதலிகாள்! நம்முடைய வியோகத்தில் ஆத்மத்யாகம் பண்ணினாருண்டாகில், பெரியநம்பி, ஆளவந்தார் ஸ்ரீபாதமே! நம்மோடு அவர்களுக்கு ஸம்பந்தமில்லையாம். நித்ய ஸூரிகள் ஓலக்கத்திலும் புகுரப் பெருதே, நம் சடகோபர் திருவுள்ளத்தையும் மறுத்தவர்களாய் அத:பதிக்கக்கடவீர்கள்! என்று அருளிச் செய்து அவர்களைத் தேற்றித் தரிக்கப் பண்ணினார். அநந்தரம்...தாமும் ஆழ்வார் வழியே பின் சென்று” இதன் ப்ராப்தே சபதி பரமவ்யோமசிஷ்டா யுரணே க்ரூபிஷே நிமசிஷ்ரவ்யாக்ரியா லம்படவம் ஸிஷ்யஸ்தோமான்யுதி ஸூமுஷே ர்ஙி-கார்யேண சாக் விந்யஸ்யோஷ்வே: பரமஸமவாரோஹுமேஜ்ஜதீந்ர: । காசாராதிம டிவ்யஸூரிக்ரூத்சஸோபாநப஢்டாநவய ஸ்ரீமந்நோமயபாஸ்வ்஢்டப஢்டிதா ஸ்ரீமாஸ்யகீலஸ்திராம் । மிஸ்ரோணி நிஸிலோஜநஸ்ச பரமவ்யோமஸ்தலி ப்ராபிகா ஸ்வஸவாசார்ய் நிரூபத்யவஸத: ப்ராப்யாஹிரோஹேத்சடா । இத்யாஸாஸ்ய ஸரஸதாந்நகமுகஸ்த்ரீதிவ்யஸூர்யாக்ரூதிராசார்யஸ்ய ச தப்ரபந்நநிவஹேஸ்தாஸ்த்ர ப்ரதிஸ்டாப்ய ச । ஸ்ரீரஜ்ஜாதிம ஢ாமஸு ஸ்வயமமூத் ஸ்ரீதிவ்யஸூரித்ரஜை: சாக் தத்பரமம் ப஢்டம் ஜிமிஸு: ராமாநுஜாஸ்யோ முநி: ।

என்கிறபடியே இங்குச் செய்ய வேண்டுங் காரியங் களெல்லாம் செய்து தலைக்கட்டி க்ருத க்ருத்யராய், நாலாநாள் அங்கே திருநாடேறவெழுந்தருளத் திருவுள்ளமாயிருக்க.....அவ்வளவிலே ..... ஸ்ரீரங்கராஜ பட்டர்...முதலானார் ப்ரஸாதித்தவற்றை ஸ்வீகரித்த வனந்தரம்.....வைகுண்டநிர்யாண நிரதராய்.....

தடஸ்தரைக்கடாஷித்தருளி.....கூடஸ்த ஸ்ரீஸூக்தி  
யையும் ஸ்ரீபாஷ்யத்தையும்.....நிக்ஷேபமாக ஸ்தரபிக்  
கும்படி ஆக்ஞாபித்து நடாதூராமுவாணைக் கடாஷித்து  
அவருக்கு ஸ்ரீபாஷ்ய எம்ஹாஸனத்தை ப்ரஸாதித்து  
.....கந்தாயாண்டாணைக் கடாஷித்து .....தம்மு  
டைய சரம விக்ரஹ கைங்கர்யத்தை கல்பித்தருளி,  
திருக்குருகைப்பிரான் பிள்ளான் முதலான முதலிகளைப்  
பார்த்து 'பட்டருக்கு இஷ்டமாயிருங்கோள்! என்று  
அருளிச் செய்து, கோயிலனைத்துக் கொத்தையும்  
அழைப்பித்து..... வேண்டிக்கொள்ள அவர்களும்.....  
கண்பனி சோர நிற்க, உடையவரும்.....அவர்களைப்  
பட்டர் திருக்கையிலே காட்டிக் கொடுத்தருளி, பட்ட  
ரைப் பார்த்தருளி..... நம்முடைய தர்சனத்தையும்  
நன்றாய் நடத்திக் கொண்டு போரும்' என்று நியமித்  
தருளினார் — அநந்தரம் ஸமூஹத்திலுண்டான  
ஸ்ரீவைஷ்ணவர்களைப் பார்த்துப் பிள்ளையும் அவர்  
களுக்கு அருளிச் செய்தபடி :- Etc. Etc.

(Ārayirappaḍi P.P. 198-200)

At first sight it looks as if the quotations are genuine, for they are apt and there is apparently no break either in the continuity of the narrative because of the text containing them. Collating the several available MSS. and printed editions of the work, one finds that this part of the text containing the D. S. Caritam ślokas is altogether absent in the comparatively older ones among them. In these latter editions the text runs as follows:-  
“.....உடையவரும், வாரிகோள்! முதலிகோள்! நம்  
முடைய விஜயாகத்தில் அத்மத்யாகம் பண்ணினார்க  
ளுண்டாகில், பெரிய-நம்பி ஆளவந்தார் ஸ்ரீபாதமே!  
நம்மோடு.....ஸம்பந்தமில்லையாய்....அத : பதிக்கக்கட  
வீர்கள் என்று அருளிச் செய்ய, முதலிகளும் இத்ததைக்



கேட்டுப்போர விஷண்ணராய், 'இனி அடியோங்களுக் குச் செய்ய வகுப்பதென்னென்று விண்ணப்பஞ் செய்ய, உடைவரும் 'பட்டினி புகுதல் பட்டினிவிடுதல் செய்யு மத்தனையேயன்றோவென்று பின்னையுமவர்களுக்கருளிச் செய்தபடி: Etc. Etc. (1)

We find that the passage without the quotations and other additions is quite in tact and runs smoothly. The only inference therefore is that there has been a considerable measure of interpolation here. And this being the only instance as far as I have been able to see where the Divyasūri Charitam ślokas are found quoted outside the Avatāra contexts, we can safely conclude that the Jīyar could not have been the author of these quotations, there being no conceivable reason why, as has been pointed out before, he should have confined himself to the Avatāra ślokas of the Kāvya only.

The quotations from D. S. Carita in the Avatāra contexts themselves may now be examined. It is easily seen that there is absolutely neither method nor regularity in the way in which the quotations are said to have been made. If, as is generally supposed, the Jīyar had been the author of these quotations, is it not reasonable to expect that he would generally have followed some method in quoting from the Kāvya, particularly, so because the ślokas are all avatāra ślokas quoted to supplement the Maṇipravāḷam text mentioning the various Avatāras of the Āīvars. As it is, we find them thrown haphazardly into the text. On a comparison of all the available editions and MSS it is seen that no two of them agree in regard to this. In some editions the D. S. Charitam ślokas are quoted first along with the

Taniam sloka and then only the text begins. In other words, they are not introduced in the midst of the Maṇipravāḷam text itself for obvious reasons, but put down specially before it. Thus the main text is made to begin after the ślokas are given. Here are some extracts:—

*Avatara of Periyālvār—*

तादात्म्यकप्रतिफलद्वगवत्परत्वं विस्तीर्य पाण्डय कथकेन्द्रजयागजेन ।

गच्छन्प्रियादुपगते गरुडेन नाथे प्रेम्णाऽशिषंरचयति स्म नमोऽस्तु तस्मै ॥

[Taniyan]

ज्येष्ठे ऽथमासे ... .. कमलापतेयः (D.S. Caritham)

तत्त्वाब्दापगमे ... .. श्रीविष्णुचित्तोऽनघः (Jayanimala)

பெரியாழ்வார்.....ஸ்ரீவில்லிபுத்தூரிலே ஆநிமாஸத்  
திலே.....திருச்சேசாதியிலே.... .. ஸ்ரீகருத்மாம்சராய்  
அவதரித்தருளி.....விஷ்ணுசித்தரென்கிற திருநாமத்  
தையுடையராய்.....போருகிற காலத்திலே.....”

(Prose text)–3.

Reading through the extracts given above one is struck by the reversal of the commonsense procedure of following up the narration of a fact or even with an apt quotation suiting the context and supplementing the narrative. No sensible author would ever give the quotation first and then the narrative which it is intended to support. Such cases of misplaced quotations of D. S. Charitam ślokas in several editions of the Ārayirappaḍi only confirm their interpolatory character. It is evidently to avoid this absurdity that some editions prefer to quote these ślokas after the particular avatāra has been narrated in prose. Here are a few extracts.

*Āvatāra of Tirumangai Alwar :*

परकालहरि वन्दे हरिपादगुहाशयम् । उन्नतप्रतिकूलेभकुंभसंभेद  
विभ्रमम् ।

नाथप्रसभसन्वस्त शैवश्रव्यादिदुर्विदपम् । परकालमृगेन्द्रं त्वां प्रपद्ये  
ऽच्युतवन्दनम् ॥ (Taniyan)

திருமங்கையாழ்வார் திருவாலி திருநகரியிலே திருக்  
குறையலூரிலே (Taniyan) நளவர்ஷம் கார்த்திகை  
மாஸம் க்ருத்திகா நக்ஷத்திரத்திலே ஸ்ரீகார்முகாம்ச  
ராய் அவதரித்தருளினார்....இவருக்கு ‘நீலநிறத்தர்’  
என்று திருநாமம் சாத்தினார்கள்.

समजायत पादजप्रमुखः कश्चन नीलनायकः ।

पुरुषोत्तमकामुर्कांशजः स्फुरिते कार्तिककृत्तिकोदुनि ।

என்று திவ்யஸூரி சரிதையிலே சொல்லிற்றிறே

(D. S. Charitam)

‘सुधागानाब्दानो ... .. कलिरिपुरमेयात्ममहिमा ’(Jayantimāla)

என்று ஜயந்தீமாலையிலும் சொல்லற்றிறே

In the majority of the Ārayirappadi MSS and editions, however, we generally find the slokas incorporated in the Maṇipravāḷam text itself and not put down separately either before or after it. In all these cases we find that there is some irregularity or other in the text which vanishes when these quotations are removed. For the purposes of comparative study and by way of illustrating this point, a few extracts may be given with and without the quotations side by side:—

*Āvatāra of Āṇḍā!*

‘அன்னவயல் புதுவையாண்டாளுடைய திருவவ  
தாரக்ரமம் இருக்கும்படி எங்ஙனையெண்ணில்:—

‘स विष्णुचित्तस्तुलसीवनावनि ... .... विशिये मुदा (1)  
என்று திவ்யஸூரி சரிதையிலே சொல்லுகிறபடியே  
‘अथ मे कृषतः क्षेत्वं लांगूलादुत्थिता मया என்றும் क्षेत्वं शोधयता  
लब्धा नाम्ना सीतेति विश्रुता भूतलादुत्थिता सा तु व्यवर्वत ममात्मजा’

என்றும் சொல்லுகிறபடிபே ஜனகராஜன்  
யாகசாலைக்கு ஸ்தலமுழுது பண்ணு நிற்க, அந்தப்  
படைச்சாலலிலே ப்ராதூர்ப்பவித்தருளின ‘சீதாலாங்கூ  
पद्मदतिः’ என்கிறதுதானே நிரூபகமாக னீதையென்று  
திருநாமம் சாற்றி உகப்போடே ஜனகராஜன் புத்தியாக  
வளர்ந்து கொண்டாப்போலே விஷ்ணுசித்தர்.....  
திருநந்தவனத்தில்.... ..கொத்தாநிற்க ..... அததிருத்  
துழாய் மண்ணின் கீழே ஜனககுல ஸுந்தரியைப்  
போலே, இவ்வாண்டாளும் வேடஸ்தயாய் ஆடித்  
திருப்பூரத்திலே பூமிப்பிராட்டி ஆவிர்ப்பவித்தருள  
.....விஷ்ணுசித்தர் கண்டு இக்கன்னிகையை  
புத்திரியாக எடுத்துக்கொண்டு கோதையென்று  
திருநாமம் சாற்றி திருமகள்போல் வளர்த்துக்கொண்டு  
போகிற காலத்திலே etc (2)

In the above passage referring to the birth of Āṇḍāl, not only D. S. Charitam ślokas but also ślokas from the Rāmāyaṇa are quoted. As it is, the former purporting to give the birth of Āṇḍāl illustrate incongruously enough the birth of Sītā and not that of Āṇḍāl. The conjunction ‘என்றும்’ after the above ślokas (to be incorporated) connecting all of them makes us infer so. Deleting the D. S. Charitam ślokas, however, we would find that the incongruity vanishes and the sentences run smoothly thus:-

“அன்னவயல் புதுவையாண்டாளுடைய திருவவதா  
ரக்ரமம் இருக்கும்படி எங்ஙனையென்னில்...अथ मे कृषतः..

.... மயா ' என்றும் 'क्षेत्र' .... விஷ்ணுதா என்றும்,  
 மூதலாந் ... .. மமாத்மஜா என்றும் சொல்லுகிறபடியே  
 ஜநகராஜன் .....ஸ்தலமுமுது பண்ணுநிற்க அந்தப்  
 படைச்சாலிலே (பிராட்டி) ப்ராதூர்ப்பவித்தருள.....  
 ஸீதையென்று திருநாமம் சாற்றி.....புத்ரியாக  
 வளர்த்துக் கொண்டாப்போலே.....விஷ்ணுசித்தர்  
 .....திருநந்தவனத்தில் ....கொத்தா நிற்க,  
 இவ்வாண்டாளும்.....ஆடித்திருப்புரத்திலே.....  
 ஆவிர்ப்பவித்தருள.....விஷ்ணுசித்தர் கண்டு....  
 கோதையென்று திருநாமம் சாற்றி திருமகள் போல்  
 வளர்த்துக்கொண்டு போருகிற காலத்திலே' etc. etc.

There are some texts in which the D. S. Charitam  
 ślokas are confused with others. Instances are given  
 below:—

#### *Avatāra of Tirumalīśai Ālvār:—*

.....பார்க்கவருடைய பத்தி கர்ப்பிணியாய் .....  
 தைமாஸத்தில் மகா நகைத்திரத்தில், ஸுதர்சநாம்ச  
 மாய் பிண்டாக்குதியாகப் ப்ரஸவிக்க, “சா ர்மீ ... ..  
 மஹநியதாரே (2) ‘சஹ்யாதி ... .. பர்வணஸ்யேவாந் (3)  
 என்கிறபடியே ஸுதர்சநாம்சேந திருமழிசைப்பிரான்  
 அவதரித்தாரென்று திவ்யஸூரிசரிதையிலே சொல்  
 விற்றிறே.’ (4)

#### *Avatāra of Kulaśekhara:—*

“....ஸ்ரீகுலசேகரப்பெருமாள் கொல்லி நகரென்கிற  
 திருப்படைவீட்டிலே .....கைத்திரியவார்ணத்திலே.....  
 மாசிமாஸத்தில்.....புனர்வசு நகைத்திரத்திலே  
 ஸ்ரீகௌஸ்துபாம்சராய் அவதரித்தருளினார்.  
 தஸ்தாபமூத் ... .. கதாஸுலக்ஷ: (5) கல்யாணே சுக ... .. அமவத் (6)  
 என்று திவ்யஸூரிசரிதையிலே சொல்லப்பட்டதினே (7)

It would appear from these two passages that both the ślokas in each instance are D. S. Charitam ślokas. But it is clear that in each case the second is a Jayantī-Mālā loka. This confusion between D. S. Charitam and Jayantī-Mālā-ślokas should unmistakably prove their interpolatory character. In their anxiety to incorporate these Avatāra ślokas, later scribes have distorted the original text by introducing errors.

There are sufficient grounds to presume that this confusion between D. S. Charitam and Jayantī-Mālā ślokas was fairly common among the later generation of Śrī-Vaiṣṇavas. Quite often they seem to have been simply guided by their contents, not at all knowing the sources from which they were taken. Taking the bibliography given in Asūri Rāmānujācārya's edition of the Arāyirappaḍi (1880) for an instance in point we note that:-

(1) The D. S. Charitam ślokas are simply styled 'the sayings of the ancients' (முன்னோர்மொழி) No. 471 p. 434.

(2) The Jayantī-Mālā ślokas are also similarly styled 'the sayings of the ancients' (முன்னோர்மொழி) without any distinction. Nos. 191, P. 392, No. 175, P. 386, No. 139 P. 373.

(3) The D. S. Charitam ślokas are mis-styled No. 79 P. 354 सा गर्भमाद्यत्त etc. is said to be from Brahmāṇḍa-Purāṇa.

(4) Jayantī-Mālā ślokas are confused with D. S. Charitam ślokas No. 196, P. 395 No. 165, P. 381, No. 148, P. 376.

Above all, the most convincing proof of interpolation is furnished by the following extracts wherein the introduction of these ślokas is found to spoil the construction of the sentences themselves and to give rise to unpardonable repetitions.

*The Avatāra of Tirumaliśai Ālvār :*

“ஆழ்வார் திருமழிசைப் பிரானாகிறார்:-.... அவதரித் தருளினபடியும், வளர்ந்தருளினபடியும், எங்ஙன யென்னில்..... பார்க்கவருடைய பத்தி கர்ப்பிணியாய் .....பின்பு தைமாஸத்தில் மகா நகைத்திரத்தில் ஸுதர்சநாம்சமாய் பிண்டாக்குதியாக ப்ரஸவிக்க..

सा गर्भ... .. तारे (1) सिद्धार्थि ... .. पर्वणोऽन्येद्यत्

என்கிறபடியே ஸுதர்சநாம்சேந திருமழிசைப்பிரான் அவதரித்தாரென்று திவ்யஸூரி சரிதையிலே சொல் லிற்றிறே. உல்பஸம்வேஷ்டிதமாய் ஒன்றும் ரூபிகரி யாமல் அவதரிக்கையாலே.....பார்க்கவரும்..... அநாதரித்து.....போகட.....அந்த உல்பாவ்ருத பிண்டாக்குதியானது.....ஜீவன் தோற்றி..... ரோதநம் பண்ண .. ..பெருமாள் குளிரக் கடாஷீத்து .....மறைய..... இவரும் மீளவும் அழத்தொடங் கினார்.”

The sentence as it is noted above shows bad construction. Of the two ślokas quoted the second one is from Jayantī-Mālā and yet they are both said to belong to the Kāvya. This irregularity in construction and error in quotation will both disappear when the two ślokas are dropped and the sentence after ‘ப்ரஸவிக்க’ runs as follows:-

“உல்பஸம்வேஷ்டிதமாய் ஒன்றும் ரூபிகரியாமல் அவ தரிக்கையாலே பார்க்கவரும்.....அநாதரித்து.....

போகட, அந்த.....பிண்டாக்குதியானது ... ஜீவன்  
 .....தோற்றி.....அத்யந்த சிசுவாய், ஆழ்வார்..... ..  
 ரோதநம் பண்ண.....பெருமாள்.....குளிரக் கடா  
 ஷித்து.....மறைய.....இவரும் மீளவும் அழத்தொடங்  
 கினார்.

शक्तिपंचमय विग्रहात्मने श्रुतिकारजितचित्तकारिणे ।

मुक्तिदायकमुरारिपादयोः भक्तिसारमुनये नमोनमः (Taniyan)

सा गर्भमाद्यत्त ... .. तारे(2) सिध्दार्थि ..... पर्वणोऽन्येद्युः(3)

ஆழ்வார் திருமழிசைப்பிரானாகிருர்..... அவதரித்தரு  
 ளின்படி.....எங்ஙனையென்னிற்..... பார்க்கவருடைய  
 பத்தி.....தைமாஸத்தில்.....ஸுதர்சநாம்சமாய்  
 பிண்டாக்குதியாக ப்ரஸவிக்க, சா ர்ம் ..... தारे  
 என்கிறபடியே ஸுதர்சநாம்சரான திருமழிசைப்பிரா  
 னவதரித்தாரென்று திவ்வியஸூரி சரிஷையிலே சொல்  
 லப்பட்டதினே”

In this extract again the sentence is irregular and we find the D. S. Charitam śloka repeated twice, once after the Taniyan śloka and again introduced in the body of Maṇipravāḷam text itself breaking its continuity. Without the ślokas the text would run smoothly and correctly.

The foregoing examination of the Ārayirappaḍi texts taken from different MSS and printed editions must be sufficient to establish the interpolatory character of D. S. Charitam quotations. It is significant that there is not one single case in which it could be pointed out that the text would suffer either in construction or in sense without them.



## Avatāra Ślōkas of the Aḷvars from Divyasūri Charitam

श्रीकासारसूरिः

हेमाब्जिनी हेमसरोजगर्भात् श्रीपान्चजन्योऽजनि तत्र योगी ।  
तारे हरेराश्वयुगाख्यमासे समस्तजीवावनकर्महेतोः ॥

श्रीभूतसूरिः

मासेऽथ तस्मिन्वसुमेऽजनिष्ठ पारेसमुद्रं पुरि मल्लनाम्न्याम् ।  
नीलोत्पलान्ताद्भुवि भूतनामा कौमोदकीशक्तिमयो मुनीन्द्रः ॥

श्रीमहदाह्वयसूरिः

तन्मास एवाविरभूद्विपश्चित् प्राचेतःक्षेऽथ मयूरपुर्याम् ।  
महामिधानो लतिकाद्घदान्तात् श्रीनन्दकात्मा मणिकैरवान्तात् ॥

श्रीभक्तिसारसूरिः

- सा गर्भमाधत्त मुनेश्च पत्नी सुदशनांशेन तदानुविष्टम् ।
- पपात गर्भो भुवि तैष्यमासे मखामिधाने महनीयतारे ॥

श्रीशठकोपसूरिः

राधेकलिदिने लाभेवैशाखे काव्यवासरे ।  
लग्ने कर्कटकेऽसूत तनयं नाथनायिका ॥

श्रीमधुरकविसूरिः

चैत्रे मासि ततश्चित्रातारकाया मजायत ।  
चक्रे तं जनको नाम्ना मधुरोपपदं कविम् ॥

श्रीकुलशेखरसूरिः

तस्यामभूच्चैरकुलप्रदीपः श्रीकौस्तुभात्मा कुलशेखराख्यः ।  
महीपतिः माघपुनर्बसूद्यदिने हरेः पूणकटाक्षलक्ष्यः ॥

श्रीभट्टनाथसूरिः

ज्येष्ठे च मासे पवमानतारे श्रेष्ठो गुणेनाजनि भद्रनाथः ।  
कृतत्रयीरूपगुरुमदात्मा कटाक्षलक्ष्यं कमलापतेर्यः ॥

श्रीभक्ताङ्घ्रिरेणुसूरिः

तत्रोदभूद्भागवता ब्दिल्वजेन्द्रो ज्येष्ठाख्यके मासि च मार्गशीर्षे ।  
श्रीबिप्रनारायणनामधेयो मुरारिवक्षोवनमालिकांशः ॥

श्रीपाणसूरिः

अथ तत्र कुलेऽन्तिमे रमारमणोरस्थितलाञ्छनांशजः ।  
समजायत पाणसंज्ञकः सुकविः कार्तिकमासि वेदमे ॥

श्रीपरकालसूरिः

समजायत तत्र पादजप्रमुखः कश्चन नीलनायकः ।  
पुरुषोत्तमर्कामुक्तांशजः स्फुरिते कार्तिककृत्तिकोडुनि ॥

श्रीगोदा

स विणुचित्तस्तुलसीवनावनिं खनिलवजरेण विधातयनकुलौ ।  
शुभे मुहूर्ते शुचि मासि फल्गुनीप्रतीततारे तुलसीवनान्तरे ॥

## APPENDIX II

### JAYANTĪ-MĀLĀ QUOTATIONS IN THE ĀRĀYIRAPPAḌI GURUPARAMPARĀ PRABHĀVAM

We have only to examine the Jayantī-Mālā quotations in the available editions and MSS of the Arāyirappaḍi on the same lines as we examined the D.S. Charitam quotations in it, to find that the conclusions are also exactly similar. Apart from exactly the same grounds set forth above in connection with D.S. Charitam slokas namely:—

- 1) Their isolation in the early portions of the work in the Avatāra contexts only,
- 2) The absence of method in the quotations,
- 3) Irregularity in the text on account of the quotations.
- 4) Confusion between the D. S. Charitam slokas and Jayantī Mālā slokas,

there are further arguments to prove the interpolatory character of the Jayantī-Mālā slokas. In the first place, one finds that there are entire MSS of the Arāyirappaḍi without those slokas. That cannot, however, be said of D. S. Charitam slokas as all the editions and MSS that were consulted contained them. It is particularly noteworthy that those that omit the Jayantī-Mālā quotations are comparatively older MSS.

Secondly, we find that even when they are quoted in the *Ārāyirappaḍi* texts, they are very rarely named. This in itself may not be sufficient to prove the interpolatory nature of the *Jayantī-Mālā* slokas, yet the natural inferences from this must inevitably lead us to that conclusion. It must be remembered that it is very rarely that the *Ācāryās* refer to the sources from which they quoted in their works. Rather than the sources from which they drew their quotations they were particular about their appropriateness. That being largely the case, the fact that the name of the *Kāvya* is mentioned every time the sloka from it is quoted must itself be proof that it must have been incorporated later. What prevents the same thing being done in the case of *Jayantī-Mālā* slokas is presumably the fact that they were but stray compositions on the subject of the *Āvatāras* of the *Āḷvārs* and *Ācāryās* individually handed down from generation and added on from time to time. viz. the *Jayantī-Mālā* was and could never have been in the nature of of things the work of one author at any particular time. As the very name implies, it is a compilation concerning the dates of the birth of the *Āḷvārs* and *Ācāryās*. Impossible as it is to fix a date for the authorship of the slokas, we are led to infer that the compilation should have been made atleast after *Vara-vara Muni*, as it includes the *avatāra* sloka of that *Achāryā* also. Now it must be clear to all those acquainted with *Vaiṣṇava* tradition that *Pinbaḷagiya Jīyar* the author of *Ārāyirappaḍi* could not have been the author of slokas from such a later day compilation.

Another reason for the later-day authorship of the compilation may be suggested. The *Ārāyirappaḍi* and

D. S. Charitam closely following it give us only the month and the Nakshatra in which the Aṭvars were born. It is difficult to believe that the author of the first named work would have quoted the Jayan'ti Mālā slokas giving the cyclic and the Kali years together with particulars regarding the Tithi, Paksha etc. without mentioning any of the details at all in the regular text itself mentioning the several avatāras. It is not easy either to see why the author of D. S. Charitam should have merely contented himself with giving the month and the Nakshatra of birth and no more, if he had already been acquainted with these avatāra slokas. It is therefore, reasonable to infer that they must have been compiled much later than the D. S. Charitam at any rate. It may be noted in passing that the only reliable work which gives similar details is the 'Prapaṇṇamṛtam' of the first half of the 17th Century A.D.

The dates, the Kali and the Saka years as the case may be are given in the form of chronograms in these slokas. Epigraphists and students of Indian History must be familiar with this peculiar device of stating dates of events. For purposes of illustration the sloka referring to the avatāra of Kulasekara may be taken and examined :—

The sloka runs as follows :—

‘कल्यब्दे सुखसंख्यया व्यपगते मासे च माघाभिधे

वर्षेचापि पराभवे सुरगुरोर्वीरे च पक्षे शुचौ ।

द्वादश्याख्यतिथौ पुनर्वसुदिने प्रीत्याख्ययोगान्विते

दातुं नः कुलशेखरः क्षितिपतिः श्रीकौस्तुभात्माऽभवत् ॥’

Here we find the Kali year given to us in the Chronogram in the sloka. According to an accepted code by

which each letter of the alphabet is said to represent a particular numeral, the two letters सु and ख in this word give us the number 72. The numeral when inverted will give us the number 27 which should be taken as the number given in the chronogram in the sloka. Now the phrase 'कल्यब्दे सुखसंख्यया व्यपगते' will mean 'After the 27th year of Kali'. A free rendering of the sloka given above will be as follows :-

"King Kulasēkara, the Amśa of Śrī Koustuba was born in this world (for the redumption of us all) on a Thursday conforming to the Dvādaśī Tithi in the bright half of the month of Māgha of the year Prabhava 27 years after Kal".

In this way is the computation made in each case from the chronograms given to us in the Jayanti-Mālā slokas.

We have seen how the Jayanti-Mālā slokas must have been very late compositions. It is difficult, almost impossible, to ascertain the source from which the several dates they contain were got. In regard to the chronology of the early history of Vaiṣṇavism during the period of the Alvars we have to rely mainly on tradition and in so doing, it is always safe to rely on the earliest records of it rather than the later ones. In view of the fact that the comparatively earlier works like the Arāyirappaḍi and the D. S. Charitam do not give such fulsome details as to the dates and in the absence of any knowledge as to the sources from which they were obtained otherwise, these Jayanthi-Mālā slokas cannot be relied on for purpose of chronology.

Extracts of Jayanti-Mālā slokas quoted in the  
Ārāyirappaḍi Guruparamparā Prabhavam

आज्ञाधि श्रीचन्दने द्वापरान्ते सिद्धार्थ्याख्ये वत्सरे मासि चेत्त्रे ।  
शुक्लाष्टम्यां भौमवारे शुभर्क्षे विष्णोर्जन्म प्राप कासारयोगी ।

सिद्धार्थिन्युष्णशमी मकरमधिगन्ते द्वापरे ज्ञानधाराश्रोदे  
संवत्सरौधे गतवति च दिने सप्तविंशे मघाख्ये ।  
नक्षत्रे भानुवारे मुनिवरतनयो भक्तिसारो मुनीन्द्रः  
श्रीमान्प्रापावतारं जगदुपकृतये पर्वणोऽन्येद्युरत्र ।

कृत्यब्दे सुखसंख्यया व्यपगते मासे च माघामिधे  
वर्षेचापि पराभवे सुरगुरो वारे च पक्षे शुचौ ।  
द्वादश्याख्यतिथौ पुनर्वसुदिने प्रीत्याख्ययोगान्विते  
त्रातुं नः कुलशेखरः क्षितिपतिः श्रीकौस्तुभात्माऽभत् ।

तत्त्वाब्दापगमे कलौ युगपरे संवत्सरे क्रोधने  
चण्डांशौ मिथुनं गतेऽह्नि नवमे पक्षेव लक्ष्णेऽपि च ।  
स्वात्यां भास्करवासरे शुभतिथा वेकादशीनामनि  
श्रीमानाविरभूदचिन्त्यमहिमा श्रीविष्णुचित्तोऽनघः ।

सिद्धानां शरदां कलावपगमे वर्षे नलाख्ये रवौ  
याते कर्कटर्कं विधावुपचते षष्ठाहनि श्रीमति ।  
नक्षत्रे चर्ययदैवते क्षितिभुवो वारे चतुर्थ्या तिथौ  
गोदा प्रादुरभूदचिन्त्यमहिमा श्रीविष्णुचितात्मजा ।

देशीशरदुत्तरे प्रभवनाम्न्यब्दे कलौ भास्करे  
 चापग्राहिणिं भूमिसूनुदिवसे ज्येष्ठामिधे श्रीमति ।  
 ऋक्षे कृष्णचतुर्दशी तिथियुते भक्तांग्रिरेणुस्सुधीः  
 रंगेशांग्रिसरोरुहैकहृदयः प्रापावतारं भुवि ॥

श्रीवेलाब्दविनिर्गमे कलियुगे संवत्सरे दुर्मतौ  
 भानौ वृश्चिकभाजि पञ्चमदिने वारे बुधस्योत्तमे ।  
 रोहिण्या सहिते लसत्युडुपतौ कृष्णे द्वितीयातिथौ  
 संजज्ञे मुनिवाहनश्चरणयो श्रारङ्गिणोऽन्तर्दधे ॥

सुधागानाब्दानां कलियुगभवाना मपगमे  
 नले वष मासे शरदि चरमे दैवतगुरोः ।  
 दिने तारे बह्वेशिशिरकिरणे पूर्णिमजुषि  
 क्षितावाविर्भूतः कलिरिपु रमेयात्ममहिमा ॥

श्रीविज्ञानदिनोत्तरे ऽहनि कलौवर्षे प्रमाथ्याहवये  
 मासे माघवनाम्नि भार्गवदिने ऋक्षे विशाखाभिधे ।  
 लग्ने शुद्धवतुर्दशीतिथियुते श्रीमत्कुलीरेऽपि च  
 क्षित्यां प्रादुरपभूत्परांकुशकविर्भाग्योदयोऽस्मादृशाम् ॥

याते संघत्सरौवेह सदगदजने द्वापराख्येश्वराब्दे  
 चैत्रे मासे द्विसप्तोत्तरदिवसवरे शुभपक्षे च रुच्ये ।  
 चित्ताख्ये भार्गवीये गुणवति च दिने प्रादुरासीच्छठारे  
 रन्तेवासिद्विजेन्द्रो मधुरकवि रसौ वऽस्मादृगुज्जीनाय ॥



### APPENDIX III

#### AN ACCOUNT OF THE MSS. AND EDITIONS OF D. S. CHARITAM CONSULTED.

The three printed editions<sup>1</sup> that I first consulted before looking into the Mss. were :

(1) The Mysore Edition of Āṅkonḍavalli Gōvindāchārya published in the Vidyātarangiṇī Press in Telugu Script in 1885.<sup>2</sup>

(2) The part-publication in the Grandha-Pradarśinī series by S.P.S. Jagannātha Swami Ayyavāralu Gāru (Arṣha Press, Viśakhapatam, in Devanagari Script 1896)

(3) The series of part-publications in the 'Sahr̥daya' by R. V. Krishnamāchārya and published by the Bhāskara Press, Trivandrum. (Devanagari)

The first of these and most probably the oldest edition is the only one that has been given to the public in completed book form. From the short introduction given to the work it appears that some Mss. were consulted and collated before the publication. For our purposes, these Mss. may be said to belong to the Mysore Group.

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1. A recent edition in Telugu Script by P. B. Annagarāchārya and A. M. Srinivasāchārya, Rathnam Press, Madras 1953 has also been consulted. It contains the bare texts of the Kavya without any introduction or notes.

2. This seems to be out of print now.

The Vizagapatam publication of Jagannatha Swam. must also have been the result of the collation of a few Mss. as would appear from the footnotes supplied in that part of the Grandha-Pradarśinī Series which contains the first eight sargas of the Kāvya. Even after sufficient enquiry it has not been possible to ascertain whether the publication of the Kāvya was continued in the series or not. For purposes of comparative study, even this part publication of only eight sargas is useful as it is based on the collation of a group of Mss. very probably different from the Mysore group. For convenience, these may be called the Visagapatam Mss.

The Sahṛdaya Publication is the latest. Besides consulting the original Mss. the editor has had in all probability access to the first two editions as well. The series stopped after the 17th sarga while the journal itself continued publication. These part-publications have not been brought out in book form. The foot notes given are exhaustive and quite explanatory.

Among the Mss. consulted, the two most important were from the private collections of Mr. T. G. Aravamuthan who very kindly and generously placed them at my disposal for purposes of comparative study. From the sources from which they were secured, these Mss. may be said to belong to the Tanjore group. They were in a good state of preservation and were written in the Pallava Grantha script.

I must also be grateful to the Jīyar of the Srīraṅga-Nārāyaṇa Jīyar Mutt, Srīraṅgam for placing an old Mss. of the Kāvya from the Mutt Library at my disposal

This is also in the Grantha Script but unfortunately incomplete.

Besides these three Mss. from private collections, the following Mss. in the Madras Government Oriental Manuscripts Library were also consulted:

1. Ms Serial No. 12150 (Descriptive Catalogue  
Vol. 21. Grantha)
2. " " No. 4670 (Triennial Catalogue  
Vol. 6. Sanskrit Grantha.)
3. " " No. 4558 (Triennial Catalogue  
Vol. 6. Sanskrit Grantha.)

It is interesting to note that No. 4670 and No. 4558 originally belonged to the Yōgi Pārthasārathy Ayyangar's collection in Triplicane. (Madras)

It turns out thus that directly or indirectly Mss. from entirely different sources have been collated in order to form a critical estimate of the text of D. S. Caritam. From many points of view, such an estimate based on the collation of Mss. from different sources is bound to be more authoritative and sound than that based on a few Mss. only, which may perhaps be even copies from one another.

Before proceeding to the text contained in these editions and Mss. a few facts may be set down here. We saw how all the Mss. consulted were written in the Pallava Grantha Script. In certain Mss. an occasional variation in the manner of palm-leaf inscription shows the change of scribe. Thus for instance, in the older Mss. of T. G. A. (which may be called T. G. A. No. 2)

the scribe changes once from the reverse of page 35 upto the reverse of page 38, and then for the most part of the 11th sarga, pages 38 to 42. Sarga 15 of the Mss. also seems to have written by more than one scribe.

Variations in the manner of writing apart, occasional variations in actual script may be noticed. But being very rare as in T.G.A. No. 2 where two slokas in Sarga 15 are actually written in the Telugu Script, they may be set aside as of no consequence to us. It may be noted in passing that even in this instance the two slokas have been struck off from the leaf (may be by the original scribe himself) and they have been written again in Grantha in the blank space on the left hand margin. This variation in script may sometimes be due to the addition of a different topic altogether to the Mss. of the Kavya in one and the same bundle of leaves. Thus it was found that MS. No. 4558 contains Periyalvar Tirumoli verses in Tamil in the first few leaves before the actual Kavya starts in the Grantha script.

Perhaps, due to oversight and the lack of opportunity for verification and correction, the numbering of the slokas and the pages in several Mss. is found to be defective. T.G.A. No. 2 may be cited as an instance. After the 47th page the numbering of the next leaf somehow starts with 78 though the sloka numbering continues correct. On the 78th page the 77th sloka follows the 76th on page 47.

Two of the Mss. may be said to give indications as to the family in which they were preserved originally. Thus T. G. A. 1 seems to have originally belonged to a

family of the Kandaḍais, i.e., the descendants of Dāśarathi, one of the chief disciples of Rāmanuja. For at the end of the 2nd Sarga we find the invocation to Anṇan<sup>3</sup> in the following words:- „Anṇan Tiruvaḍigalē Saraṇam). This, however, is the only place where the invocations to Anṇan is found. At the end of the other Sargas in the Mss. the invocation is generally to Rāmānuja in the following words:- ‘Śrīmatē Rāmānujāya Nāmah’

Ms. No. 12150 (or L.) may also be said to give a similar indication. For in the very beginning of the Ms. we find besides the usual invocation to Śrī Rāmānuja the following other ones:- ‘Śrīmadanantārva Guravē namah’, ‘Śrīmatē Gōvindarāja Guravē namah’, ‘Śrīmatē Varadārya Guravē namah’, ‘Śrīnīvasa Guravē namah’, ‘Anṇan Tiruvaḍigalē Saraṇam’, ‘Appan Tiruvaḍigalē Saraṇam’.

The last two must surely indicate that the Ms. have belonged to the descendants or the disciples of Anṇan or Appan, while the other three may point to the names of certain individual Achāryas of the line.

The Ms. No. 4558 contains an invocation sloka, evidently to Dāśarathi and his descendants thereby showing again that it belonged probably to the family of the Kandaḍais, descendants of Dāśarathi.

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3. Anṇan is short for Kōil Kandaḍai Anṇan.

## THE COLOPHONS

Coming to the textual part of the available editions and Mss., the colophons at the end of each sarga present a problem, for study. For apart from the apparent contradiction involved in cases where both the verse and prose colophons are set down together in the Mss., the absence of the verse colophon in some and of the prose colophon in others, the different readings of both given in different editions and Mss., and some times wholesale variations of them are all vital points to note in an examination of these colophons. For purposes of clearness and thoroughness each one of these aspects mentioned above may be considered one by one

1. *The Verse Colophon:* The colophon sloka is as follows:-

“स्वामीरङ्गपतिर्गुरुवरवराधीशश्च यस्यात्तुलो  
वाद्यूलो वरदः पिता वरवरक्षमेमेशलक्ष्मीसरवः ।  
लोकेशा जननीतु तस्य गरुडश्रीवाहन श्रीसदः  
काव्ये दीव्यति दिव्यसूरिचरिते सर्गोऽयमादिर्गतः ॥

It is found at all the editions and Mss. consulted contain the sloka though it may be with different readings here and there. It is usual to put down this sloka in full at the end of the first sarga and then give a shortened form of it at the end of other sargas in some such way as follows:- ‘Swamītyādi Sarvam Pūrvavat’ (T. G. A. 2, end of Sarga 17 page 125). 1, Some scholars think that ‘Kshāmāmēśa’ may be the correct word for ‘Kshāmēśa’ M. S. No. 4670 (O.R.L.) End of Sarga 16, page No. 143 and Ms. 4558 (O.R.L.) End of Sarga 15. (or)

‘Swamiranga + Sargōdvitiyō Gatah (T. G. A. 1, end of 2nd Sarga).

It may happen that even this shortened form is omitted at the end of later sargas in certain Mss. and editions of the Kavya. See the Mysore, the Vizagapatam and the Trivandrum Edns.). Also, T.G.A. 1, T.G.A. 2, etc. But having been put down at the end of the opening sarga, we may must take it that they were omitted subsequently to avoid repetition.

2. *The Prose Colophons* : The Prose Colophon found in the Mysore Edition runs as follows:—

‘इति श्रीकाश्यपकुलतिलकस्य रंगाधिपारोग्यशालावल्लभस्य कविवैद्य  
पुरन्दरानन्दनामधेयस्य गण्डवाहनपण्डितस्य श्रीनिवासकवेः कृतौ  
दिव्यसूरिचरिते महाकाव्ये प्रथमस्सर्गः’

The vizagapatam and the Sahrdaya editions give this colophon in the same form as above. The editor of the former, however, points out that in certain Mss. that he consulted, ‘Sri’ is omitted and ‘Mahākāvye’ included after ‘Divyasūri Charitē’ (Foot Note 4th Sarga).

There are other readings of this prose colophon also which may be given — ‘इति काश्यपकुलतिलकस्य रंगाधिपारोग्यशाला  
वल्लभस्य कवि वैद्यपुरन्दरानन्दनामधेयस्य श्रीरंगगण्डवाहन  
पण्डितस्य श्रीनिवासकवेः कृतौ दिव्यसूरिचरिते प्रथमस्सर्गः’

(Ms. No. 4558 O. R. L. end of 1st Sarga)

It is interesting to note that a slightly different reading of it is found at the end of the 16th sarga in this very Ms. thus: इति काश्यपकुल तिलकस्य श्रीरंगराजोग्यशाला  
वल्लभस्य कविवैद्यपुरन्दरस्य श्रीगण्डवाहनपण्डितस्य कृतौ दिव्यसूरि  
चरिते षोडशस्सर्गः

Ms. No. 4670 O. R. L. has श्रीरंगराजोग्यशालावल्लभस्य for 'श्रीरंगाधिपारोग्यशाला' and omits श्रीनिवासकवेः (end of the 16th sarga) Ms. No. 12150 has श्रीरंगगरुडवाहन पण्डितस्य for गरुडवाहनपण्डितस्य (end of the 1st Sarga). It may be noted that these slight variations in reading do not alter even in one case the purpose and meaning of the colophon. For purposes of convenience again and to avoid unnecessary repetition, the colophon given at the end of the first few sargas is either omitted altogether at the end of the later sargas as in Ms. 12150 or as is generally the case given in a shortened form as follows: 'इतिकारयपकुलतिलकस्येयादि पूर्ववत् तृतीयस्सर्गः'

(T. G. A. 2)

'कारयपकुलतिलकेत्यादि पूर्ववदद्याप्यन्वयः'

(T. G. A. 2 end of Sarga 15)

Very often we find it simply stated thus: 'इतिदिव्यसूरि चरिते अष्टादशस्सर्गः' at the end (Ms. 4670, 4558, and all the printed editions). In all cases where this form has appeared together with the fuller prose text. But at least in two Mss. T. G. A. 4 I and the S.N.J.M3. It is not clear whether this form is exactly so, for the text of the prose colophon is nowhere given in these two Mss. The inscription कारयपकुल तिलकेत्यादि पूर्ववदन्त्यान्वया पञ्चदशस्सर्गः (S. N. G.) seems to be out of place at the end of sarga 15, (S. N. G.) for nowhere either before or after, is the prose colophon given in the Ms. It is thus found that except T. G. A. 1 and the S. N. J. Ms. all the other editions and Mss consulted contain the prose colophon.

Finally as regards the colophons, we cannot but notice Ms. No. 12150 which affords the solitary instance



of an Ms. of the Kāvya which does not contain the colophon sloka. (This may perhaps be the instance referred to by the editor of the Vizagapatam series in his foot-note above cited.) But what we find in its place in the Ms. is another colophon sloka which can be easily found to be an exact synonym for that found in the other Mss. The sloka runs as follows :

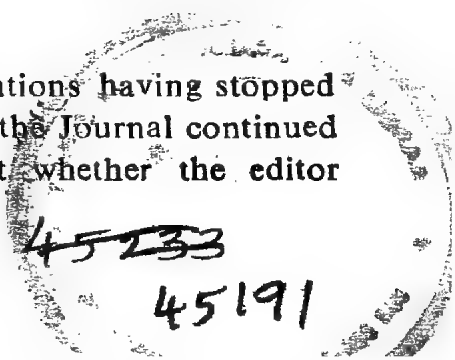
“यन्नाथः फणिराजभोगशयनो रंगेश्वरो यत्पिता  
सौम्यश्रीसखमंगलाधिपविभुस्सर्वज्ञचूडामणिः ।  
यन्माता भुवनाधिपा विहगराजवाहामिधश्रीसदः  
काव्ये दीव्यति दिव्यसुखिचरिते सर्गोऽयमादिर्गतः ॥”

This may, therefore, be taken as a case of variation of the verse colophon rather than of its absence.

3. Then we come to the most important textual problem, viz., the number of sargas in the Kāvya. The Mysore edition contains 18 sargas. In the absence of any specific mention on this subject of the number of sargas in the Kāvya, we must take it that the Mss. on which the editor relies contained 18 sargas or that at any rate he did not come across any containing more than 18 sargas.

As pointed out before, it has not been found possible to ascertain whether the Grantha-Pradarśini series publication was continued after the eighteenth sarga or not, and it is, therefore, not possible to say also how many sargas it contained.

The Sahridaya series of publications having stopped with the 17th sarga, even though the Journal continued other publications, makes us doubt whether the editor



had access only to 17 sargas of the Kāvya. Or, it may well be that the publication was stopped for other reasons.

There are certain Mss. which can be clearly said to be incomplete either because the original scribe himself left it as such, or because portions of the leaves in the Mss. have been lost through lapse of time. Thus T. G. A. 1 breaks off abruptly after the seventeenth verse of the 17th sarga on page 113, evidently showing that the rest of the leaves were lost. S. N. J. contains only 15 sargas in full. The 16th sarga is incomplete, nearly twenty stanzas being missing. Ms. No. 12150 breaks off on page 67 after the 89th sloka of sarga 12. Such obviously incomplete Mss. as cited above cannot help us to determine the number of sargas in the Kāvya.

The problem itself, i.e., determination of the number of sargas need not arise at all but for the fact that three Mss. contain more than 18 sargas. They are 1. T. G. A. 2, 2. Ms. No. 4558 and 3. Ms. 4670. What seems more than a surprising coincidence is that nearly 12 stanzas from the 81st to the 92nd sloka in the 18th sarga should be found omitted in all these three Mss. It is also very striking that in all these the text should break off and be resumed exactly at the same point of the narration, exact to the very letter. In Ms. No. 4670, it is found that there is a break after the 81st sloka on page 158, thus :-

दासेरवृजकुतनिष्ठुरप्रचारै पितासं संसदि महाग्नपूर्णसूरिम् ।  
कूरेशन्तमपि नृपोऽक्षपत्पुखदायव्यद्वि.....

Then the text commences on page 158 after a blank, thus:

.... वाचो भद्रशासनकरणेषुरंगराजः ।

अध्यायं यतितिलकस्य कूरनाथं दृष्ट्वा तं किमपि वदद्यात् ।

In Ms. 4558, we find an exactly identical breaking off after the 81st sloka on page 79 reverse and an exactly identical resumption on page 80.

Another striking similarity between these three Mss. consists in the fact that the portion beyond the 18th sargas in them is incomplete. There is a sudden break in the second half of the 114th sloka, thus:

कुमुदांज्ञांशं संभूतो महापूर्णश्च धीनिधिः । शङ्कुकर्णशजो रङ्गी ...

and at this point the narrative stops in the Ms. It is a point to note again that all the three Mss break off exactly at the same spot-exactly to the very letter.

These similarities should naturally lead one to the conclusion that the three Mss. should have been copied from a common source. But, further scrutiny would reveal that it is not exactly so. Comparing the Ms. No. 4558 and 4670, the two Triplicane Mss. it is indeed possible to conclude on a point of similarity that they were either copied from the same source or were copies of each other. A similar comparison of T. G. A. 2 and Ms. No. 4558 would reveal that they are entirely different and could not have come from a common source. In the first place, we find that the colophons at the end of the first sarga are set down differently in the two Mss. While the O. R. L. Mss. contain both the verse and prose colophons in extenso, T. G. A. 2 has the verse colophon only. At the end of Sarga 2,

the O. R. L. Ms. sets down the short prose colophon beside the colophon sloka whereas T. G. A. 2. has both in full. While Sarga 3 of the O. R. L. Ms. ends with the short prose colophon only, T. G. A. 2 ends with both the sloka being given in full and the prose text in its shortened form, thus :

इति काश्यपकुलतिकस्येत्यादि पूर्ववत् तृतीयस्सर्गः

The difference is even greater when we come to the end of the 15th Sarga. While T. G. A. 2 has the following

स्वामी रंगपतिगुरुवररासर्गोस्सपञ्चदशस्सर्गः काश्यपकुल  
तिलकेत्यादि पूर्ववद्याप्यन्वयः - पञ्चदशस्सर्गः'

The O. R. L. Ms. concluded thus: स्वामीत्यादि सर्वं पूर्ववत्  
इति पञ्चदशस्सर्गः

Then again the prose colophon is set down in extenso beside the shortned sloka form at the end of sarga 16 in the O. R. L. Ms. while only the short prose colophon is found in T. G. A. 2.

Another striking difference to note between these two Mss. is that while in T. G. A. 2, from after the end of the 18th sarga, the leaves are numbered as क, ख, ग, घ the same continuation in the other Ms. runs continuously on page 81 after the finish of the 18th sarga on page 80. In other words, the numbering of the leaves continues the same till the very end, Thus, we are led to infer that these three Mss. should have originated from at least two different sources.

The point, however, to note is that they contain a good bit more than 18 sargas published in the Mysore edition. The incompleteness of this unpublished part,

unfortunately, precludes the possibility of determining whether this formed part of the Kāvya as its 19th sarga or whether it was a later addition to it by a different author. As a through understanding of the text of this unpublished part alone can help to solve this problem and it also affords ample confirmatory evidence as to the author and date of the Kāvya; the text is given separately.

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1. A small note appended after the completion of the 18th Sarga in the Telugu Edition by P. B. Anṅangarāchārya and A. N. Srīnivāsachārya seems to suggest the possibility of a 'continuation' of the Kāvya.

अथान्तेवासिनां वर्यो वाधूलकुलभूषणम् ।  
 अस्तौद्वाशरथिश्चित्रबन्धैरेवं यतीश्वरम् ॥  
 विचित्रविभवोद्भूतं चक्राङ्कितभुजश्रियम् ।  
 रामानुजं बन्धमुक्तिनिसर्गमहितं भजे ॥  
 का लोकमोहिता नित्यं किंसम्बन्धिनिमेषिका ।  
 पत्युःप्रियं कानूक्तिं ज्येष्ठं को वा सदोऽवतात् ॥

(दिव्यस्तजातिः—रामानुजः)

का प्राथ्यां का जनैर्वन्द्या केन ज्येष्ठोऽभिपूज्यते ।  
 केन वैष्णवसिद्धान्तः स्थापितोऽभिपूज्यते ॥

(व्यस्तसमस्तजातिः—रामानुजेन)

कान्ता कनिष्ठमुनयः कथं वाच्या विचक्षणैः ।  
 वेदान्तः सुस्थिरःकस्य धिया तस्यास्तु मङ्गलम् ॥

(दिवस्समस्तजातिः—रामानुजयतिनः)

राघवाबरजा नित्यं सम्बोधनपदं कथम् ।  
 कान्ता चिन्त्या च केनाग्रयः केन श्रुतिः स्थिरा ॥

(दिव्यस्तसमस्तजातिः रामानुजेन)

नमोक्तिः क्रियते केन केन धूताः कुट्टष्टयः ।  
 का मृग्या किं निषेधोक्तौ पदं केन नवोयजः ॥

(दिवस्समस्तव्यस्तजातिः—रामानुजेन)

वेष्टा किमव्ययं वाऽर्थो वीरः किं कुरुते रिपून् ।  
 कश्चिन्त्यो भाष्यकारः को रामानुजयतीश्वरः ॥

(व्यस्तसमस्तान्तर्लापि जातिः रमणविरहेण)

यस्तीमणशः शब्दः केन रामानुजान्वयः ।  
 केन निन्दति वा कान्ता वसन्तेन्दुमनोभवान् ॥

(वर्णापहारान्तर्लापिजातिः—रमणविरहेण)

मायावी मेघनादश्च पापात्मा केन निर्जितः ।

तादृक्पाषण्डषण्डश्च जितः केन महात्मना ॥

(एकालापजातिः-रामानुजेन)

वीक्ष्य रामानुजं साक्षात् जना दोषानुषङ्गिणः

पलायन्ते भृशं त्रस्ताः कुतः श्रुत्यन्तगोचराः ॥

ओजस्विजातिः-समितितः)

गुरुशुश्रूषणरतः सुमित्रानन्दवर्धनः ।

यतीन्द्र त्वमिवाऽऽभाति को वा वनपरायणः ॥

(श्रिष्ठोपमालङ्कारजातिः-रामानुजः)

पद्मालया का सा विष्णौ कुत्रस्था द्रौपदी भृशम् ।

कस्मात् शोकपरीता स्यात् रामानुजयतिः कथम् ॥

(सकौतुकजातिः-श्रीरङ्गस्थानरतः)

को महीं शस्ति तन्मूर्ध्ना का धार्या तस्य कार्यिभिः ।

कृताजौ तेन को मृग्यो जयाद्यक्षरसाह्वयः ॥

(आदिवर्णान्तरलीपिजातिः-जयः)

खर्गस्थाःके मूर्तिभूषा का सामुद्रिकवर्णिता ।

बाहुमानं कियत् लक्ष्मीः किं भजेत् कं गता त्रयी ॥

अमरः, सुषुमा, अजानु, पङ्कजम्

अन्त्यवर्णान्तरबहिर्लापि जातिः

शाक्यादीन्समयानन्यान् कः खनीत्या निराकरोत् ।

बाह्यान् हन्तापि स कयं तदन्यः शङ्करः पुनः ॥

(भग्नोत्तरबहिर्लापिजातिः-यतिराजः)

कुबेरगुप्त। का विष्णोः पत्नी का किं भिदापदम् ।  
उत्पत्तिवाचि धात्वादिघर्णः कः को यतीश्वरः ॥

(वर्णोत्तरबहिलापिजातिः-रामानुजः)

सम्बोधनं किं सौमित्रेः कः पद्मसुहृदुच्यते ।  
कस्मै स्पृहयतेऽधर्मः किं कुर्याः भवान्तये ॥

(वाक्योत्तरबहिलापिजातिः-लक्ष्मणार्यमाकलये)

वैवस्वतं कथं प्राहुः इन्द्रजिदवादिनं च कम् ।  
प्रलम्बघ्नं च कं भूता दानं कस्मिन् सरंश्च कम् ॥  
(पन्थानं कं स्यां ?)

यामुनेयकृपापूरवाराकरसुधाकरम् ।  
रामानुजं शेषरूपमाश्रये भववैरिणम् ॥  
(श्लोकोत्तरबहिलापि जातिः)

कृष्णः कमवधीत् पद्माधारं किं कं सृजेद्धनुः ।  
कां शृण्वन्ति च कां मुक्तेर्मुनीशगिरमर्थिनः ॥  
(आद्यन्तबद्धान्तर्लापि जातिः-

मुरम्, नीरम्, शरम्, गिरम् )

घवप्रिया का निरोधप्रश्रया के पदे वद ।  
को ज्येष्ठसेवी नियतं आत्मन्याम्नायवित्तु कः ॥  
(शृङ्खलापद्धतिजातिः-रामानुजः)

कः प्राप्यः प्राणिनां कल्पे के वन्द्याः कति वा ग्रहाः ।  
दृष्ट्वा कं लज्जते श्वश्रूः कमुशन्ति यतीश्वरम् ॥  
(एकान्तरितशृङ्खलाबद्धजातिः-अर्चावतारम् )



शाक्यादिनानाराद्धान्तनिराकृतिचणाशयः ।

अय्यन्तनिष्णातकृतिः यतिराजस्सदा जयेत् ॥

(निरोष्ठयजातिः)

निरोधप्रब्रवाच्यं किं पदमव्ययमस्य तु ।

वर्णावाद्यन्तयोर्न्यस्य कस्त्वयीस्थापको गुरुः ॥

(आद्यन्तवर्धमानाक्षरजातिः-रामानुजः)

भर्तुःप्रिया का तत्प्रान्ते दत्त्वा वर्णद्वयं पुनः ।

पाषण्डपण्डवेतब्धचण्डकण्ठीखस्तु कः ॥

(अन्त्यवर्धमानाक्षरजातिः-रामानुजः)

मायामतनिहन्ता कः तदुत्तरपदान्त्ययोः ।

वर्णयोर्न्यस्य मध्ये द्वौ वर्णौ को भाष्यकृद्वद ॥

(मध्यवर्धमानाक्षरजातिः-यतिरामानुजः)

कस्त्रिदण्डी जगद्वन्द्यः किसम्बन्धी पराक्रमः ।

को ज्येष्ठसेवी कः प्रश्ने च बर्गो मध्यमश्च कः ॥

(हीयमानाक्षरजातिः-रामानुजः)

सुवर्णपदवाक्यार्थं सद्भावावार्थपरायणा ।

तरुणी किं नहि नहि यतिराजस्य वागियम् ॥

(अपहृतिजातिः)

सर्वज्ञजनविध्वंसी दोषज्ञो वंशदण्डधृक् ।

पूर्वबन्धुपरित्यागी द्विधा रामानुजोऽवतात् ॥

(स्तुतिनिन्दाजातिः)

गुरुशुश्रूषणविधौ जागरूको दिवानिशम् ।  
श्रीमाम् रामानुजो जीयात् सुमित्राह्लादकारकः ॥  
(द्वययजातिः)

विद्युद्वीसाम्वरो विष्णुश्चापदण्डधरोऽद्भुतः ।  
कारुण्यरसदः कालमेघः पूजितो भूवि ॥  
(प्रहेलिकाजातिः-रामानुजः)

घानुष्कैर्बध्यते कोऽसावर्पितैका प्ररोमुखे ।  
रामानुजेन त्यजता बन्धून् सदसि नात्यजत् ॥  
(दाशरथिः-दत्ताक्षरजातिः)

रामानुजयतीन्द्रस्य कीर्तिः संश्रृण्वतां सताम् ।  
मनोज्ञमधुराचारा दिक्षु सर्वासु सर्वदा ॥  
(अर्थ(र्घं) तृष्ठा(क्रिया?) वञ्चकजातिः)

अशेषतोषिणी शेषशेषुषी मोक्षपोषिणी ।  
रामानुजस्य धीरस्य महिताप त्रयी शिखाम् ॥  
(कर्तृक्रियावञ्चकजातिः)

मारात्रनुमनो वृत्ति कृपावात्सल्यजन्मभूः ।  
राजोमयात्मभङ्गैषी पायाद्रामानुजो भवान् ॥  
(गूढपादजातिः)

खतःप्रभावशास्त्रेण सुपुण्यजनवर्धनः ।  
भजन् रामानुजः वायात् त्वामहो रङ्गवासनाम् ॥  
(विन्दुमती जातिः)

रङ्गिसाशयसंप्राप्ता प्राप्ता संयशसा गिरम् ।  
भासते जनुमारा सा सा रामानुज ते समा ॥  
(अनुलोमप्रतिलोमजातिः)

नानानोनुन्नाम मनुमननोन्नमनामयम् ।  
नमाभि मौनिनमिनं मुनीनामेनमुन्मनाः ॥  
(द्व्यक्षरजातिः)

तत्ततेति ततातीत तातत्ता तततेति तुत् ।  
तान्ततान्तो ततान्तात् तु तिन्ततन्तिततां ततः ॥  
(एकाक्षरजातिः)

रामानुजा जानुमारा मारादा ररदा रमा ।  
नुदाधिका कादिधानु जारका ममकारजा ॥  
(सर्वतोभद्रचक्रम् )

त्वया रामानुजासन्ना श्रीरङ्गजनवासिना ।  
माया प्रमादजा नुन्ना भगव(मुरभि?)ज्जयवादिना ॥  
(गोमूत्रिकाबन्धः)

यामुनेयदयाम्भोधे मुनेतेऽमलमान (नम्ः) ।  
नेसेदिरे शोहमाया यभरेखे यशो वद ॥  
(अर्धभ्रमचक्रम् )

यतिराजगिरा मग्ना यतिजाजजरामका ।  
कामराजपरायत्ता सोमराजगिरा यथा ॥  
(मुरजबन्धः)

रागद्वेषतमोभानुमारक्षितजगत्प्रजम् ।

जम्भारिघोरास्त्रहतिं मायिगोत्रनुतिं स्तुवे-(त?तं?)

(सुदर्शनचक्रम्-रामानुजम्)

रामपादरतप्रेमा मायिनो नुनु नोदयः ।

निजयन् सामयं स्वीययत्नैः सोऽव्यात् श्रुतिस्सुराद् ॥

(पाञ्चजन्यबन्धः)

मुषितानि मयामानि मुदगानि निजात्मनि ।

निजयोक्त्या तया पाप नित्ययामस्य (बत्सकृपां? तृकृप मुनिचप)

(कौमोदकीबन्धः)

सद्गुणौङ्कार चापोद्यत्प्रत्यग्बाणस्पृशत्परम् ।

रङ्गिसक्तं भजे नान्यसक्तं हन्तारमुद्यमैः ॥

(शाङ्ग धनुबन्धः)

राजन्तं समयचारी रपिरङ्गपते धुरा ।

राजल्लक्ष्मीराजतं तं नमतामुन्नतासुराः ॥

(नन्दकखड्गबन्धः)

रामानुजं यति दृष्ट्वा यःपुरा रागतोऽब्धिना ।

क्षिपन्तं तं खराद्धान्तवेदान्तोक्तमहागिरा ॥

मम मायाशयायात ममताशमनोद्यम ।

मन्ये त्वां खगराड्वाहपतिमद्य दयाब्धिराद् ॥

(खड्गबन्धः)

रामानामापि मायास्त्वित्यनुजाद्यनुजीविनुत् ।  
नुन्नमायिब्रजः शान्तः श्रीतानुष्ठानकृदिवजः ॥

(छुरिकाबन्धः-रामानुजः)

त्रिधामाधारचिद्वृत्ते(?) त्रिगुणाजाश्रयो त्यदा(द) ।  
त्रयात्मन्वन्ते चवै(त्रिवेद्यन्तप्रतिष्ठातः) त्रिदण्डस्ते मतोऽपि च ॥

(त्रिदण्डबन्धः)

रामानुजाचार्यमुने नेतृकामजुषां सताम् ।  
दामोदरं दयोद्योत तव दासोऽस्मि हृदधुरा ॥  
काषायवसने मुद्यो जा चामो मार(हृत्) स्मितः ।  
सोदर्यदारानुदयो जुषेतं मधुरं गिरा ॥

(गूढश्लोककाषायबन्धः)

श्रीमान् रामानुजमुनिः श्रीशपादार्पिताशयः ।  
नित्योर्ध्वपुण्ड्रविमलः शमश्रीनियतः पुमान् ॥

(गूढपादोर्ध्वपुण्ड्रबन्धः)

राघ्देतं विविधातीत त्वाती धान्नराननु ।  
कायः पततमामेत तत्त्वमेतत्तमित्यजः ॥

(खस्तिकबन्धः)

श्रुतिनीति गतिज्योतिर्मतिरीति कृतिप्रति ।  
यतिजाति पतिर्भाति रतिभूति हतिस्थितिः ॥

(दलवर्णादिपद्मबन्धः)

यामापते यत्तयादि यस्ते यष्टुयतेर्घनम् ।

यमयक्षयतो यच्छेद्यत्सो यतियशोधनम् ॥

(कर्णिकावर्णादिपद्मबन्धः)

शमेमेश शरीरीश शस्तास्ता शशवाबश ।

निसब्दाब्दाश शैय्याश शालाक्षा शशदिन्दिश ॥

(विकचसंकोचपद्मबन्धः)

यशसा विमलामाय यमालापहराविय ।

यतिराज नमोऽमेय यमे मोघरसाशाय ॥

(नीवि-(भिन्न?) यतिलोमचक्रम्)

रागमायातमोनुत्य ज्ञानादिनिधिमाश्रये ।

यमादिशक्तधौराजद्वेदान्तविजयी भव ॥

(उभयवेदान्तिमकुटबन्धः)

रामाया मानुषी नुन्नानुजबन्धुजनात्मजा ।

यमादिनियताचारा यतिमान्या सुखा गतिः ॥

स्फुरन्मतिपरिच्छिन्न श्रुतिपक्षार्थभाष्यकृत् ।

पते मुनीनामाकल्प तेजसरश्चुभमस्तु ते ॥

(उत्तरवाक्यं तिपङ्क्तिमकुटबन्धः-रामानुजयतिपते)

वेदभावमथ प्रियभाषया बद्यवन्दित वैष्णवमानुष ।

कोकनेयः यमिनां वरवैहवे यामुनेय समाहितवे समः ॥

हृद्यश्रीरभिराद्वरङ्गि चरणाम्भोजद्वयीकौन्वहं,  
श्रुत्वा भाषितमान्यवाग्रचनये हामुत्र नीरक्तधीः ।  
सच्छिष्य भ्रमनुद्यतीन्द्र चतुरो गं निर्घृताङ्गः सदा  
दान्तोऽसौ स्मृतिविश्रुतो लसति मे गीतार्थधीः सर्वदा ॥

(शतारमहाचक्रम्-श्रीभाष्यकारो रामानुजमुनिः)

इत्थ दाशरथिः स्तुत्वा प्रयित्सुं परमं पदम् ।  
रामानुजं मुनिं प्राह भक्त्या शिष्यजनावृतम् ॥  
वेदान्तद्राविडाम्नाय दर्शनानां प्रवर्तकाः ।  
उत्पत्स्यन्ते परं के वा प्रधानाः के सुरेषु वा ॥  
इत्युक्तो दाशरथिना तमुवाच यतीश्वरः ।  
वर्तमानेषु शिष्येषु भवान् कूरेश्वरात्मजः ॥  
कूरेशश्च मुख्यः स्यात् वेदान्ते द्राविडागमे ।  
कूरेशस्य च ते वंश्याः नित्यदर्शनधूर्वहाः ॥  
वेदान्तार्थव्याससूत्रबोधायनसुवृत्तिमत् ।  
भाष्यं सद्गुक्तं व्याख्यातुं पारम्पर्यात्प्रवर्तकाः ॥  
भविष्यन्ति बुधा भूमौ प्रथमं कूरेश्वरः ।  
तत्र श्रीविष्णुचित्तार्यस्ततो वरददेशिकः ॥  
वादिहं साम्बुदस्तस्मात् ततो वेङ्कटदेशिकः ।  
कवितार्किकसिंहाख्यः ततः श्रीविष्णुयोगिराद् ॥  
वाधूलवंशे श्रीदेवराजो यो वरदस्ततः ।  
तस्मात् श्रीगोपुराधोशः श्रीनिवासस्ततः सुधीः ॥  
तत्सुतो वरदः श्रीमान् तत्तज्जातस्ततः परम् ।  
पारम्पर्यादविच्छिन्नं व्याक्रियासुर्जगद्धितम् ॥  
एतेषां शिष्यसन्तानोपदेशद्वारतो जनाः ।  
मनीषिणः सुचरिताः भूयासुस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः ॥  
जगद्धिताय श्रीदेवेशचोदितः श्रीपराङ्कुशः ।  
यं प्राह द्राविडाम्नायं नाथयोगी ततोऽग्रहीत् ॥  
ततः श्रीपुण्डरीकाक्षः ततः श्रीरामदेशिकः ।  
ततः श्रीयामुनाचार्यः ततो माताधरो गुरुः ॥

तस्मादहमवापं तन्मद्भूयं कुरुकेश्वरः ।  
 गोविन्दः कुरुकाधीशः ततः कूराधिपस्ततः ॥  
 महाचार्यस्ततो वेदचूडायोगीश्वरस्ततः ।  
 लोकाचार्यस्ततः कृष्णमिश्रः श्रीमाधवस्ततः ॥  
 तस्माम् श्रीपद्मनाभार्यः ततो लोकेश्वरस्ततः ।  
 देवाधिपगुरुस्तस्मात् कुन्तीनगरजन्मभूः ॥  
 श्रीशैलेन्द्रगुरुस्तस्मात् श्रीमान् सौम्यवरो मुनिः ।  
 तस्मात्सौम्यवराधीशमुनिवर्षात् मदंशजात् ॥  
 श्रीमद्वाधूलवरदनारायणगुरुश्च सः ।  
 तत्सूनुः श्रीनिवासश्च पौत्रो रम्यवरो मुनेः ॥  
 अभिरामवरस्तस्मात् श्रीगोपुरपतिपतिगुरुः ।  
 श्रीनिवासः सुतस्तस्मात् श्रीमद्वरददेशिकः ॥  
 तत्सूनुः श्रीनिवासश्च, श्रीमद्गरुडवाहनः ।  
 ततः प्राप्य जगद्बोधं तनुतात्तत्त्वनिर्णये ॥  
 श्रीमान् श्रीरङ्गगरुडवाहनाख्यगूही सुधीः ।  
 सरःप्रभृतिसूरीणामिदं वृत्तं सविस्तरम् ॥  
 सर्वलोकोपकाराय काव्यरूपेण वक्ष्यति ।  
 मदनुग्रहतो वंश्याः तदीयाः परितो भुवि ॥  
 द्वाविडाम्नायवेदान्तभाष्यतत्त्वोपदेशतः ।  
 लोकान्कृतार्थयिष्यन्ति कलिदोषवशंवदात् ॥  
 इत्युक्त्वा दाशरथये रङ्गधाम्नो विसर्जितः ।  
 रामानुजमुनिः प्राप्तुं परमं पदमुद्यतः ॥  
 हरिशङ्खगदाद्यंशः सरोभूतमहाह्वयाः ।  
 योगिनो देहलीशाय्रे मुक्तिं गोपपुरे ययुः ॥  
 भक्तिसारश्चक्ररूपी ब्रह्मरन्ध्रे विसर्जितः ।  
 कुम्भघोणे पुरे शार्ङ्गपाणेः प्राप परां गतिम् ॥  
 मधुरेण कवीन्द्रेण पुरुषांशेन संयुतः ।  
 विध्वक्सेनांशसम्भूतः कुरुकायां पराङ्कुशः ॥



विद्यावेत्रात्मनिर्निद्र चिद्धाशाखावलम्बिनाम् ।  
 अग्रे रङ्गयादिविष्णूनां प्रपेदे पामं पदम् ॥  
 कुक्कुटाख्यपुरे रङ्गिसेवोत्को दैष्णवप्रियः ।  
 कौस्तुभांशो महीपालशेखरः कुलशेखरः ॥  
 शृण्वन् रामायणं गोष्ठ्यां हता सीतेति रक्षसा ।  
 तद्वाक्य एव तीर्णाव्धिहरिवक्षस्यदृश्यत ॥  
 रङ्गेशस्य गुरुर्विष्णुचित्तो गोदागुरुर्ययौ ।  
 ताक्ष्यांशो वटधाम्नस्तु मुक्तिं धन्विपुरे पुरः ॥  
 रमांशो निचुलावल्ली गोदा भूमयंशजाऽपि च ।  
 नीलांशा चोलतिलका तिस्रो रङ्गयङ्गसङ्गताः ॥  
 श्रीवल्लभाहयः पाण्डयश्चण्डांशो मधुरापुरे ।  
 विष्णुचित्तविदां त्वन्तः तत्त्वविद्विमसासदत् ॥  
 चोलेन्द्रो निचुलावल्लीजनको निचुलापुरे ।  
 प्रचण्डांशभवो रङ्गिश्चशूरोऽगात्परं पदम् ॥  
 वनमालांशजो भक्तपादरेणुः परं पदम् ।  
 श्रीरङ्गेऽगाद्देववेव्या हरिचामरयौषिता ॥  
 शुकांशे लोकसारङ्गमुनिस्कन्धासिकोऽभवत् ।  
 श्रीवत्साङ्ग- पाणसूरिरङ्गेशहृदयङ्गमः ॥  
 वामनक्षेत्रे पूर्णाख्यमुकुन्देक्षणगोचरः ।  
 ययौ शाङ्गात्मा कलिजित् मुक्तिं हस्तगतोऽभवत् ॥  
 श्रद्धा कुमुदवल्लयाख्या परकालविबोधिनी ।  
 दिव्याङ्गना वैद्यचक्रवर्ती पुत्र्यगमद्विवम् ॥  
 विष्णुचित्तप्रेया विष्णुचेटी सा विमला दिवम् ।  
 गोदायाश्चात्मनः सख्या प्रपेदेऽनुग्रहाख्यया ॥  
 कणिकृष्णः सुभद्रांशो भक्तिसारपदानतः ।

प्रपेदे परमं धाम हरिस्तुतिपरायाणः ॥  
 विष्वक्सेनाद्य भृत्यद्वयमुखांशो नाथयोगिराद ।  
 वीरनारायणो मुक्तोऽभवद्योगस्थितो मुदा ॥  
 मुनीश्वरो 'नाथमुनिमु'क्तस्तत्र तदात्मजः ।  
 पृश्निगर्भांशसम्भूतो योगाधिष्ठितमानसः ॥  
 जयत्सेनांशजः श्रीमत्पुण्डरीकेक्षणो बुधः ।  
 श्रीरङ्गे नाथयोगीन्द्रच्छात्रो मुक्तिमुपागमत् ॥  
 नाथयोगीन्द्रशिष्ययोगात् कालांशः कुरुकाधिपः ।  
 गङ्गाभरण (नगरः?) पूरन्ते योगेन परम् पदम् ॥  
 पुण्डरीकाक्षसच्छिष्यो रङ्गक्षेत्रे समासदत् ।  
 पौत्रो नाथमुनेः श्रीमान्यामुनेयो यतीश्वरः ॥  
 कुमुदाक्षांशसम्भूतः परमं पदमासदत् ।  
 नरसिंहाभनांश श्रीराममिश्रः परं पदम् ॥  
 कुमुदाक्षांशसम्भूतो महापूर्णश्च धीर्निधिः ॥  
 शङ्कुकर्णांशजो रङ्गी ... ..

## PART II

### CHAPTER I

#### ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF VAIṢNAVISM

The religious and cultural history of India reveals that South India has made distinct contributions to Indian culture and Civilisation despite her initial indebtedness to northern sources for much of the spiritual impulse provided for the development of the major religions of the land. They had their origin no doubt in North India, but once they were planted in the soil of the South they grew and developed in such a way as to make distinct contributions to their religion and philosophy in the subsequent centuries.

It is natural to expect that not a little of this contribution was due to the impact of the northern religions and cultures with the social, religious and cultural background of the people of the South. The history of Vaiṣnavism in South India, therefore, should take note of its origin in the North, the religious background of the South with which it came into contact and lastly, its distinctive development in its southern milieu.

The origins of Vaiṣṇavism must no doubt be traced in the Vēdas, wherein Viṣṇu is one of the several deities to whom prayers (hymns) were sung and worship offered. Though there are references in the Ṛig Vēda describing his long strides and the three steps by which he measured the universe and to 'Paramapadam', his adode described 'as an eye fixed in heaven', he seems to have held but a subordinate place among the Vēdic Gods.

The worship of these innumerable gods having become mechanical, a wave of religious and philosophical speculations arose towards the close of hymn period regarding the nature of God, Man and the Universe and the relation between them. The philosophic speculation of the Upaniṣadic seers served no doubt to establish the transcendence and the immanence of God on the contemplation of whom one could attain bliss. But they could not answer the practical needs of ordinary men who wanted an object of adoration and worship in their daily life.

It must be noted too that the free and unfettered speculation of this period led, by way of a reaction to earlier thoughts on religion and forms of worship, to the rise of Buddhism and Jainism in the Eastern regions of Magadha and new theistic systems of worship in the Western Regions round about Mathura. The worship of Vāsudeva was one such theistic systems. While Buddhism and Jainism denied the existence of God and prescribed self abnegation and a strict code of moral conduct for salvation, the new theistic systems of the west developed the idea of a supreme God of devotion to whom was

the sole means of salvation. The worship of Vāsudēva which belonged to this system was called the Sātvata and the Bhāgavata religion. —‘Sātvata’ because of the name of its followers, (Sātvatās) and ‘Bhāgavata’ presumably because of the worship of Vāsudēva as the ‘Bhagavat’.

*The development of Bhāgavata Religion :*

As it is this Vāsudēva cult that formed the basis for the later development of Vaiṣṇavism, it is necessary to trace the various phases of its development. There is enough literary evidence<sup>1</sup> to show that the worship of Vāsudēva existed as early as the 4th century B. C. its subsequent progress is indicated clearly by the following literary and inscriptional records.<sup>2</sup>

1. *Patanjali*, in his comment on the Pāṇini Sūtra (IV, 3, 98) interprets the term ‘Vāsudēvakā’ to mean ‘the worshipful’. (Patanjali may be ascertained to the 3rd century B. C.)

2. *The Ghosundi Inscription*; assignable to the 2nd century B.C., mentions the construction of a wall round the hall of worship of Sankarṣaṇa and Vāsudēva.

3. *The Besnagar Inscription* — assignable to the earlier part of the 2nd century B.C. refers to the erection of a Garuḍadhvaja with the image of Garuḍa at the top in honour of Vāsudēva ‘the God of gods’ by Heliodōra, who calls himself a Bhāgavatā.

1. See R. G. Bhandarkar-Vaiṣṇavism, Saivism and minor religions. Section 2.

2. R. G. Bhandarkar — Vaiṣṇavism, Saivism and minor religions — Sections 7, 8 and 9.

4. *Nanaghat Cave Inscription No. 1*, datable to the 1st century B.C., in which the names of *Unkarṣaṇe* and *Vāsudēva* occur.

The foregoing records would show clearly the progress of the cult during nearly four centuries before the Christian Era. The last of the inscriptions noted above is significant as showing that the *Bhāgavatā* Religion already in its developed form had spread southwards and it is reasonable to infer that it spread further south gradually into the Tamil Country in the course of the next century or two.

The subsequent development to be noted is the evolution of Vaiṣṇavism as the result of an interesting process of syncretism by which *Vāsudēva*, the God of the *Sātvata*s came to be successively identified with *Nārāyaṇa*, *Viṣṇu* and finally with the Cowherd *Kṛṣṇa*. The identification of *Vāsudēva* with the Cowherd *Kṛṣṇa* became the predominant influence in the further development of Vaiṣṇava thought and religion. As we have no reference at all to the Cowherd *Kṛṣṇa* in early literature and the major work in which we get references to his exploits is the *Harivamśa* of about the 3rd Century A.D., we may say that this should have happened sometime before it, that is, roughly about 2nd century.

Within the chronological set up provided by the literary and inscriptional records noted above it is possible as Dr. Bhandarkar has shown, to give an outline of the development of Vaiṣṇavism. The worship of *Vāsudēva* is as old as Chandragupta Maurya who reigned in the last quarter of the 4th century B.C. This is shown

by the allusions of Megasthenes, the Greek Ambassador to the existence of this cult in his account. We have already noted its further development upto the first century B. C. as indicated by the Nanaghat Cave inscription 1. After a long interval of nearly 4 centuries we get again evidence to show the reemergence of the Bhāgavatā religion about the first quarter of the 4th century A.D., when the Guptas rose to power. Students of history know that the Gupta princes Chandragupta-II, Kumāragupta-II and Skandagupta styled themselves as 'Parama Bhāgavatās' in their coins. They were the worshippers of Bhagavat or Vāsudēva. We have enough literary evidence to show its continuous development in the subsequent centuries as one of the major religions of India.

The foregoing brief account would show that after its rise and early development in the north, Bhāgavatism with its vital doctrine of devotion came into the Tamil country in the early centuries of the Christian era and began to influence the spiritual thoughts and aspirations of the people in that region. The influence of the Bhāgavata religion, its doctrine of devotion, and the stories of the exploits of Kṛṣṇa which formed an important element in it are all reflected in full measure in the works of the Āḷvārs.

## CHAPTER II

### RELIGION IN THE TAMIL COUNTRY AS REVEALED IN THE SANGAM AND POST-SANGAM LITERATURE.

The Tamils were traditionally noted for their belief in God. But, as was the case with several ancient peoples, they too seem to have believed, not in one God, but in several Gods, godlings and spirits with different forms of worship. The literature of the Sāṅgam age. (Cir. 100–300) A. D.<sup>1</sup> reveals the existence of the most primitive forms of worship side by side with most elaborate vēdic sacrifices.

The ancient Tamil country was classified into five regions - Kurinji, the hill region, Marudam, the region of the Plains, Mullai, the region of the forests, Neydal, the shore region and Palai, the region of the desert. Murugan, Tirumāl and Indiran known also as Sēyōn, Māyōn, and Vēndan respectively were the presiding deities over the Kurinji, Mullai, and Marudam Regions, and Varuṇan was the lord of the shore region.

The Tolkappiyam which mentions this conventional regional classification of land with their presiding deities, does not mention any separate deity for Palai, evidently because this category of land did not actually

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1. I have accepted this date for the Sāṅgam age based on the Gajabāhu Sēṅguttuvan Synchronism.



exist in the Tamil Country. Besides these, the tamils are said to have worshipped 'Korāvai' as the goddess of valour and paid homage to their heroes by erecting 'Naḍukal' or stones in their honour. The worship offered to these 'Vīrakkal' stones of honour in memory of those who fought and fell in battle, was not just hero-worship but one that was associated with the concept of the hero as God. For even people of a later generation offered worship to these memorial stones erected long before their time.

Another common custom was the worship of a pole fixed to the ground in an open space in the village common which, in the opinion of some scholars, may have been the forerunner of the worship of the Linga form of Siva. We have evidence also of their belief in spirits in another ancient institution of the 'Arangūr-Avaiyam' (the assembly of judges) who met under the shade of a tree in the 'Urmanram' or the village common to dispense justice, the prevailing idea being that gods or spirits resided in the trees and that in their presence no one would dare speak untruth.

The Sangam works reveal also more developed forms of religion than those indicated by the ancient forms and modes of worship noted above, showing the natural process of religious evolution from the primitive to the more refined forms. But it is rather difficult to trace this evolution stage by stage as the dates of the individual compositions included in the Sangam collections cannot be determined very precisely. However it is possible to distinguish between the older and the later groups of works generally.

Among the Sangam works, the following are considered the earliest group. They comprise Naṭṭinai, Kuruntogai, Ahanānūru, Puranānūru, as also the Porunar - āṟṟuppaḍai, Perumbān-āṟṟuppaḍai Pattinappalai and Maduraikkānji idylls. As some of Nakkīrar's compositions are included in the Ahanānūru and other early anthologies, his compositions namely Neḍunalvāḍai and Tirumurugāṟṟuppaḍai may also be considered to belong to the early Sangam age. It may be noticed that the Eṭṭuttogai and Pattuppāṭṭu collections were made on the basis, among others, of the specific literary concepts portrayed in the compositions; and it is just possible, therefore, that some late compositions came to be included in them along with older ones. However we find that in certain anthologies there is a large proportion of ancient compositions while in others there is large number of comparatively later ones.

All the works included in the conventional literary group called 'the Eighteen group' (Padinenkīl Kaṇakku) appeared immediately after the Sangam works i. e., after the close of the third century A.D.

On the basis of this rough literary chronology, it is possible to indicate the state of religion in the Tamil land in the Sangam and the post Sangam age. Describing the nature of human behaviour amongst the several sections of the society. Tolkāppiyar refers to the following - Aruvahaippaṭṭa Pārpanappakkam', Ivahai Marapin Araśar pakkam', 'Irumūnru marapin Ēnōrpakkam'. From this and his other references to the sections of the community like Andanar, Araśar, Vaṇigar and Vēlālar,

it would be clear that castes had already evolved in the country in the early centuries of the christian era.

Tolkāppiyar also mentions among the various forms of worship, the worship of Koḍinilai, Kaṇḍali and Valli. These have been variously interpreted by scholars. The celebrated commentator Nachchinārkiniyar holds that Kaṇḍazhi refers to Bṛmhan, as he is the destroyer of all bondage (Kaṭṭu). In recent times, scholars have tried to maintain that the three together constitute the worship of the three fires (Muchchudār) viz., the Sun, Moon, and Fire. Still others would say that Kaṇḍali is just 'Kāṇḍal', the flower intended for the worship of Muruga suggesting that it refers to it and nothing more. 'Pāvai-nilai' mentioned by Tolkāppiyar is said to be the laudation or praise of a king in association with God in general and with Tirumāl in particular. This would indicate the vogue of the worship of Tirumāl in the Sangam age along with that of other Gods.

Tolkāppiyar would consider the Kali and Paripādal as the most appropriate meters for the Ahapporuḷ mode of literary expressions; and as the institutions of bull fight (ērutajuvudal) and Kṛṣṇa worship are mentioned in the Kalittogai, an acknowledged composition of that class of literature, we may infer that they were the common practice of the Tamil people in the Sangam age.

Then we find evidences for the gradual spread of Āryan concepts and modes of worship in the Tamil land. The 'Kāḍavul Vāzhtu' verses ascribed to Perundēvanar for Puranānūru, Ahanānūru, Kuruntogai, Kalittogai etc., mentioning Murugan, Tirumāl and Śiva reveal Āryan

concepts; And, in the Padirruppattu anthology, we find explicit references to yagñas (Vēlvi).

In the Purāṇānūru, the asceticism (Tāpatha Nilai) of a brahmin is described in the following expressive words denoting the performance of elaborate yagñas -  
 “எண்நாணப்பலவேட்டும் தீர்நாண நெய்வழங்கியும்”  
 viz., The Brahmin has been described as having performed several sacrifices with profuse ghee offerings. The name of the famous Pāṇḍyan King ‘Pāṇḍyan Palyāgaśālai Mudukudumi-p-Peruvāzhudi’ itself suggests the performance of Vēdic sacrifices under Royal auspices. All these would show that Āryan modes of worship and culture had come to be accepted at any rate among the higher strata of society. A poet addressing this Pāṇḍyan King ‘Mudu Kudumi’ says eulogistically that his umbrella would be lowered only when the God of the three eyes (Siva) goes round the temple in procession. Here is a clear reference to the existence of temples for Siva.

In the ‘Tirumurugaṟruppaḍai’ all the deities including Viṣṇu and Siva along with Indira are said to have gone to Āvinanguḍi to plead for Brāhma who had been imprisoned by Siva. We get also descriptions of Muruga as having six faces and twelve hands. Besides these, we get the various forms of Muruga worship in that work. In the Padirruppattu, there are references to ideas from the Vēdas, Purāṇās and the Itihāsas.

The references to Āryan concepts and modes of worship like sacrifices side by side with some of the more ancient forms in the Sangam literature taken as a

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whole may be said to reflect the gradual fusion of two cultures Āryan and Tamil. As already noted, however it is not possible to indicate precisely the stages of this evolutionary process of the mingling of the two cultures.

Coming now to the Post-Sangam epoch we find the most important of the works assignable to it namely 'Īlappadhikāram' reflecting a further stage in religious evolution. It is well known that though the events described in it are said to have occurred in the 2nd Century A.D., the work itself was written later (about 5th century A. D. at the earliest). In it we find stories from Panchatantra and references to the Sanskrit drama 'Bāla Āarita' indicating its late date. More Important than all these, from the point of view of the development of Vaiṣṇavism in South India, is the reference to 'Nappinnai' in the 17th Chapter of the epic entitled 'Āychiyar Kuravai'. It may be noted that 'Nappinnai' is referred to in the hymns of the Ālvars and Āṇḍāl.

Students of South Indian history know that during the dark and troubled times that set in after cir. 300 A.D. as a result of the Kalbhra invasions, the rule of the traditional kings declined and Hinduism suffered eclipse. Even before this from the age of Aśoka himself Buddhism and Jainism seem to have spread slowly into the Tamil country. Having come from the North and settled in this region, the Jain saints had begun to learn Tamil and spread their religious ideas among the people. The Jaina Sangam is said to have been established in Madura in 475 A.D. It was in this period that Buddha temples (Vihāras) flourished in Puhār and Uraiyaṛ..

Again, it was in this period cir. 5th Century A.D. that Kōchenganān strengthened his rule and built many temples for Śiva and Viṣṇu and Karaikkāl pēyār and the Mudal-Alvārs and the Śaiva Nāyanmārs came on the scene. It was also about the end of the 6th Century A.D., that the Pallavas and the Pandyas established themselves at Kānchi and Madurai respectively and the dark age ended. Yet the religion that enjoyed royal patronage was Jainism. About the beginning of the 7th Century, Appar at Kānchi and Sambandar at Madurai defeated the Jains and established Śaivism in the land. The hymns of the Ālvārs also show the part played by Vaiṣṇava saints like Periyālvār for the common cause of overcoming the heretical faiths of Buddhism and Jainism. Thus the post-Sāngam literature reveals at first the interplay of religions like Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism on the one hand and Buddhism and Jainism on the other and later rivalry between them.

We can easily see from the foregoing sketch certain broad trends of religious development in the south during the Sāngam and the post-Sāngam epochs upto the age of the Ālvārs. Bhāgavatism in its full fledged form with its emphasis on devotion and the worship of Vāsudēva in its early phase would appear to have come into the country by about the 2nd Century A.D. This is revealed in the Paripāḍal which refers clearly to the Vyūha doctrine implied in the worship of Vāsudēva as identified with the cosmic 'Nārāyaṇa.

We have, in an earlier section referred to the later phase of Bhāgavatism which developed after the identification of Vāsudēva with the cow-herd Kṛṣṇa. As we

have no references to his exploits in early Sanskrit literature and as the first major work to mention them is the *Harivamśa*, assignable to about the 3rd Century A.D., we may take it that these Kṛṣṇa stories should have also reached and become popular in the Tamil country in the course of the next Century. It is no wonder therefore, that these stories as also the concept of the Avatāra of God implied in the Bhāgavata religion found full expression in the hymns of the Ālvārs.

The first four or five centuries of the Christian Era in the Tamil country may be described in a sense as an age of religious toleration in which Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism flourished side by side with Buddhism and Jainism. It is only in the subsequent epochs that the Vaidika religions developed hostility to the Avaidika religions of Buddhism and Jainism. And as long as the hostility to the common enemy persisted till about the 7th Century A. D. Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism lived in perfect amity with each other. After the common foe had been vanquished, sectarian feelings developed within the Vaidika fold itself.

It is clear that these two religions developed on parallel lines in the Tamil land, following the same stage of development. The parallallism is striking indeed in that in both the religions the hymnist periods of the Ālvārs and Nāyanmārs reflecting what may be called the revelational phase of religion co-incided with and covered almost the same epoch between cir. 500 to 900 A. D. Their philosophic phase developed not long after the codification of their respective canon which also seems to have occurred very nearly about the same time, though

not exactly in the same generation. Thus the history of Vaiṣṇavism from the earliest times upto Rāmānuja in the Tamil country covers the first two phases-the revelational and the early philosophical – as represented by the Āṭvārs; and the Ācāryās from Nāthamuni to Rāmānuja. The succeeding chapters will deal with the age of the Āṭvārs and the age of the early Āchāryās from Nāthamuni to Rāmānuja.



## CHAPTER III

### ĀLVĀRS

#### POYGAI-ĀLVĀR:-

An examination of the available sources of information concerning the subject of our study is a necessary prelude to the treatment of the subject itself. What strikes one foremost in this connection is the total absence of any historical work which can be deemed reliable for the life and times of the Vaiṣṇava Saints. Epigraphical evidence also being scanty, we are forced to rely on tradition, the next available source. Now, all the tradition, concerning Poygai-Ālvār is embodied in the Guruparamparās and later works based on them. These works having been written long after the events described therein, the tradition they contain must be subjected to a careful scrutiny. Great difficulty is felt in tracing the origins of tradition in its several aspects which is a necessary process in the estimation of its continuity or otherwise. For, much of the value of tradition as a source of history depends on the definite nature of its origin and continuity. It is found necessary also to sift pure tradition from a considerable mass of legendary matter contained in these works. Great care is thus necessary in treating these Guruparamparās as sources for the life of Poygai-Ālvār.

It is not unusual that we get some facts about our studies even from purely non-historical literary sources. By their lyrical outpourings, the Āḷvārs – all of them – contributed largely to the richness of Tamil literature, and it is not surprising therefore that they are sometimes quoted in works on Grammar. The ‘Antādi’ verses of Poygaiyār have been used by the author of ‘Yāpparuṅgala Virutti’ to illustrate some sutras in his work. It may be that we are able to get some information about the saints from such references however, few, in general literature.

The most reliable of all the different sources is undoubtedly the work of the Āḷvar himself namely ‘the first Tiruvantādi’ of the Nāḷayiram.

The earliest extant work on the hierarchy of the Śrī Vaiṣṇavās is the Guruparampara of Pinbaḷagiya Perumāḷ Jiyar. Regarding Poygai-Āḷvar it says that he was born in the month of Āśvayuja in the Asterism ‘Śravaṇa’ and does not give the cyclic or the Kali years. It gives us also an account of the other two of the Mudal-Āḷvārs, together with the life of Poygai and narrates their meeting at Tirukkōvalūr. In fact, this is the earliest record of the meeting of the Mudal-Āḷvārs at Tirukkōvalūr.

The D. S. Caritam of Garuḍavāhana follows the Guruparampara and states that he was contemporary with the other two of the Mudal-Āḷvārs. The second ‘Sarga’ of the Kāvya gives an account of all the three together. The point to note again is the contemporaneity of the Mudal-Āḷvārs.

Later works like the Guruparampara of Brhma-Tantra - Swatantra - Jiyar and Prapannāmṛtam of Anantarya largely follow these two and add in several ways to their accounts. Thus, besides the Nakṣatra and the month of the several avatāras, they give us the cyclic and the Kali years. The Prapannāmṛtam has considerably added to the comparatively simple narrative of the meeting of the Mudal Ālvars at Tiruk-kōvilūr contained in the earlier works.

Minor treatises like the 'Peria Tirumuḍi Aḍaivu' 'The Sannidhi Guruparampara', the 'Vāḷittirunāmam of Appiḷai', have followed one or the other of the early works embodying tradition. The 'Upadēśarattinamālai' of Varavara Muni, the 'Adhikāra Saṅgraha' of Vēdānta Dēśika the Rāmaṇuja Nūrranthādi of Tiruvarangathamudanār - all together form a class of source works generally reflecting older tradition as found in the Guruparamparās.

#### *The Traditional Account :-*

Tradition has it that the Ālvar was born at Kañci, as the avatāra of Viṣṇu's Conch on a Saturday corresponding to the Śravaṇa Nakṣatra of the bright half month of Āṣvayuja in the year Siddhārti, the year 861902 of Dvāpara Yuga<sup>1</sup>. He is said to have been born in a flower and spent his life in prayerful wanderings and quest of God. In the course of such wanderings he is said to have met casually one day at

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1 See Guruparamparam of Brahma Tantra - Swatantra Jiyar.

Tirukkōvalūr the two other Āḷvārs, Pūdattār and Pēyār in the narrow pial of a house<sup>1a</sup>. They took shelter there during a stormy night when they felt that a fourth person had also come into their midst much to their discomfort, though actually no human form was visible. This turned out to be no other than the God of the place who revealed Himself to their mind's eye and vanished at once. The Āḷvārs were much struck by the divine presence and were inspired to sing each a centum on the Great one. These works have come down to us as the first, second and third Tiruvantādis, which form part of the 'Iyarpa' collection of the Divya-Prabandham. In their subsequent wanderings they are said to have met Tirumaḷisai

Alwarat Tiruvallikkēṇi whence all the four went to Mayilai, the birth place of Pēyāḷvār and from there parted once again.

From the foregoing account it will be seen how we have not got anything like a lead in the matter of fixing the age of the Āḷvār. We need hardly mention that the manner and the date of his birth as given above are too fanciful to be true history. The Guruparamparās declare that he was born in a flower in a tank. The name Poygai-Āḷvār is a tāmil name of the saint, while 'Kāśārasūri' is the Sanskrit name given in the D. S. Charita. The Sanskrit term 'Kāśāra' means a lake and

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1a. For the different versions of the meeting and discussions thereon refer to the section on 'The Contemporaneity of the Mudal-Āḷvārs.

the name apparently is a translation of the tamil Poygaiyār in the sense in which the authors of the Guruparampara understood it. In other words, they seem to have believed that the original tamil name of the saint should have been derived from the manner of his birth. A little reflection and a scrutiny of the names of some of the early Sangam poets would show that the name 'Poygai' need not be associated with any such fanciful origins. It was customary in those days to name poets for various reasons. For instance, 'Kazhāttalaiyār' was the name of a poet who hailed from the place called 'Kazhāttalai'<sup>2</sup> 'Ṣittalai Ṣattanār' was another poet so named because the scalp of his head was full of sores, 'Ṣittalai' is also considered the name of a place to which the poet might have belonged.<sup>3</sup> 'Kūḍalūr-Kīḷar' is evidently the name of a poet after the place he came from. In much the same way 'Poygaiyār' or 'Poygai Ālvār' should have been derived from the place called Poygai or from the particular region called 'Poygai-Nāḍu'. We have good reasons, therefore, to set aside the hagiologists' account of the birth of Poygai-Ālvār.

The same is true of the name 'Pūtam' and 'Pēy'. We come across a poet 'Nappūtanār' in early Sangam literature. Without the prefix 'Na' the name would be 'Pūdanār' which is not very different from Pūtattālvār. Similarly, 'Pēyanār' the name of the author of 'Mullaipattu' in the 'Aiṅgurunūru' collection is not very different from the name 'Pēyālvār'. It is thus clear that these were names of persons which were in vogue in

2. 'Naṟṟinaṟ' - Ed. P. Nārāyaṇasāmi Iyer - P. 38.

3. Ibid. P. 64.

those early days in the Tamil land, and any attempt at associating the names of these Ālvārs with stories regarding their births must be deemed imaginary.

That the date assigned to Poygai Ālvār in the Guruparamparās is also fanciful will be seen, when we realise that it is only the later works like that of the 'Brahma-Tantra-Swatantra-Jīyar' that pretend to give such seemingly precise and minute details including the cyclic and the Kali years and not the earliest extant literature on the subject like the Aarāyirappaḍi or D. S. Charitam.

We cannot suppose that the later hagiographers would have had better information than either Pinbaḷagiya Jīyar or Garuḍavāhana, particularly in view of the fact that tradition was the only source of information for all of them.

#### *Epigraphical Evidence :*

An inscription in the Aruḷāḷapperumāl temple at Kānci dated in the 9th year of the reign of Vikrama Cōḷa records that Poygai-Ālvār and Pūtattālvār were born under the asterism 'Jyēṣṭa (Tam. Kēṭṭai)' <sup>4</sup> According to Prof. Keilhorn's calculations, the coronation of Vikrama Cōḷa took place in A.D. 1118<sup>5</sup> and the date of this inscription should therefore be 1126-27<sup>6</sup>. That part of the inscription which specifies the Nakṣatra reads thus:

4. S. I. I. Vol. 3 pp. 186 to 190.

5. Ep. Indica. Vol. 7, p. 5.

6. Dr. S. K. Ayyaṅgār refers to it as an inscription of 1118 referring itself to reign of Vikrama Cōḷa - Early Hist. of Vaiṣṇavism in South India, p. 76.

ஐயங்கொண்ட சோழ(ம)ண்டலத்து எயிற்கோட்டத்து  
 எயில்நாட்டுத் திரு(வ)ந்தியூழவாரைப் பாடியருளின  
 ஸ்ரீ (பு)தத்தாழ்வாரும் ஸ்ரீ பொய்(கை)யாழ்வாரும்  
 (பி)றந்த திருக்கே(ட்டை)ட நாள் அருளாள்(ப்)பெரு  
 மாள் புற(ப்)பட்ட(ரு)ளி.....<sup>7</sup> According to the Guru-  
 paramparās and the D. S. Caritam, however, the Nak-  
 satras in which the Alvārs were born are Śrāvaṇa and  
 Avittam respectively.

Commenting on the above discrepancy, Dr. S. K. Ayyengar observes as follows :

"This raises the question how far the hagiologists are correct and whether we should not prefer the inscription to the hagiologists. It is just possible that in this particular the hagiologists are wrong; but the question arises that in regard to this detail what better information the writer of the inscription could have had; the presumption would be that the hagiologists put themselves to the trouble of investigating the matter when they set themselves up to write the lives of these saints. The inscription writer could have been under no such obligation. He might simply have set down what he might honestly have heard about the matter either outside or from the temple people. That after all, is a 12th century piece of information in the inscription and could not lay claim to be accurate for centuries considerably anterior to the 12th century, whereas the information of the hagioloists at least presumes an enquiry whatever might have been the sources of information available to them. In a matter like this there is not perhaps much to choose

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7. S. I. I. Vol. 3, p. 187.

between the two and it would be better to accept a perhaps continuous tradition rather than an isolated piece of information like the detail in the inscription relating to a period far anterior to the date of inscription"<sup>8</sup>

In other words, while admitting the possibility of error on the part of the hagiologists in this particular, he would still be inclined to prefer their version to that of the inscription, on the ground that the former presumes an enquiry and investigation which the latter may not. It may be pointed out that the presumed enquiry on the part of the hagiologists could only have been of the nature of ascertaining that tradition, which should have been the basis for the inscription writer also. The temple people who must have been the functionaries of the temple are no mean repositories of tradition, so that we see that both the inscription and the hagiologists could have relied on tradition only for their versions.

It is true that it is 12th century piece of information that is contained in the inscription. But tradition as preserved by the hagiologists is not by any means anterior to it. Indeed, if we understand 'continuous tradition' to mean that which is embodied in the *Ārayirappaḍi* and the works following it, it would be even posterior. Besides, it is not easy to question the reliability of the inscriptional version. For one thing, it has been inscribed by the temple committee, a quasi Governmental body and at the Capital City, and not in

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8. Dr. S.K. Ayyāṅgar—Early History of Vaiṣṇavism — P. 76.



an unimportant place. Secondly, it pertained to a very important and memorable religious ceremony that had to be performed on 13 days in the year<sup>9</sup> – a matter in which all possible care would have been taken even in respect of the minutest details.

The value of the evidence contained in the inscription may therefore, be deemed greater than that of the hagiologists, though as the learned author himself observes that ‘in a matter like this there is not perhaps much to choose between the two.

The foregoing is the only inscriptional evidence so far available concerning Poygai Āḷvār. It does not, however, help us very far in as much as it gives only the Nakṣatra of his birth and no more. Surely, it is no great point to make out of it, that the Āḷvār must have lived centuries prior to 1126.

Light is sought to be derived from a purely literary source viz., some illustrative stanzas given by the commentator on ‘Yāpparuṅgala Virutti’ a Tamil treatise on prosody. These stanzas are quoted under the name ‘Poygai-Vāḱku’ and among them are found two verses of the first ‘Tiruvandādi’ (v. 51 and 69)<sup>10</sup> and two others which refer to a ‘Tiraiyan’<sup>11</sup> and a certain ‘Tērkkīḷi’<sup>11a</sup>. From this the inference is drawn that Poygai Āḷvār was

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9. S. I. I. Vol. 3 – p. 190.

10. Yāpparuṅgalam – with commentary Ed. S. Bhavānandam Piḷḷai (1916) pages 219-20.

11. Ibid. pp. 45 and 518.

11a. Ibid. p. 138.

also the author of several works other than the first 'Tiruvandādi'. In other words, it is held that the Ālvar and the author of the stanzas styled 'Poygai-Vākku' are one and the same.<sup>12</sup> With this as basis and by reason of the fact that in one of the verses a 'Tiraiyan' is addressed by the poet himself, a contemporaneity between him and the Ālvar is attempted to be established. This 'Tiraiyan' is held to be no other than Tondamān Iṇdirayan of Tamil literature, who held sway over Kāñci prior to the Pallava rule over that region.<sup>13</sup>

But there are difficulties in accepting the foregoing. One cannot be certain about all the verses named 'Poygai-Vākku' in the work above mentioned being the compositions of one and the same author in spite of their general and uniform designation, as such. To mention only one instance where the author of the 'Yāparuṅgala Virutti' himself seems to have erred, it may be pointed out that the 'Veṇbā' beginning with: 'Vaṇṇi-veṇṇiya' quoted as 'Poygai-Vākku'<sup>14</sup> and which has been accepted by many<sup>15</sup> has been attributed by some scholars to Auvaiyār<sup>16</sup>. The inference, therefore, is that the author

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12. Dr. S. K. Ayyaṅgār, Early History of Vaiṣṇavism page 72.

13. Ibid. pp. 68-70.

14. Yāparuṅgalam - Ed. S. Bhavānandam Piḷḷai p. 350.

15. M. Raghava Iyengar - Ālvargaḷ Kālanilai p. 25.

16. R. Raghava Iyengar - Article on Auvaiyār, Sentamiḷ, Vol. 2, pp. 229-30. See also 'Seyyuḷiyal' sūtra 72 Naccinārkkiniyar Urai - Madurai Tamiḷ Sangam Edn. 1917 - p. 66.

of the 'Yāpparuṅgala-Virutti' might have had confused notions not only about this particular verse but also about the others quoted in the work as 'Poygai-Vākku'. More than that, it seems very probable that the author himself intended to denote two persons of the same name 'Poygaiyār'. Thus for instance, in his commentary on Sūtra 57, he observes after having set down three illustrative Stanzas thus:— “எனவும் இவை முற்றியலு கரமருகிக் காசு பிறப்பு என்னுமிரண்டு சீரானுயிற்றள வாயினுஞ் சிறப்பிலே போதுமெனக் கொள்க அரிமல ராய்ந்த கண்” என்பது பொய்கை வாக்கு.<sup>17</sup>

It is significant that out of the three stanzas he should have singled out the one beginning with 'Arimalar' and named it specially 'Poygai-Vākku'. The natural inference should be that he wanted to denote that the author of that verse was quite different from the Ālvār – the author of the two 'Tiruvandādi' verses. It is no argument to suggest that the author mentioned the one and ignored the other two because their authorship was well known. For, later in the work he quotes these very two verses of the first 'Tiruvandādi' under the specific name 'Poygai-Vākku'<sup>18</sup>. In view of all these, it does not seem quite safe to presume that all passages named 'Poygai-Vākku' are by Poygai-Ālvār.

Granting for the moment that the Ālvār is the author of these verses it is not easy to maintain that the reference to the 'Tiraiyan' in the verse beginning with

17. Yāp. Virutti Ed. S. B. Pillai - p. 220.

18. Yāpparuṅgala Virutti - Ed. S. Bhavānandam Pillai - P. 460.

‘Āḷiyiḷaippa’ is to Tondaman Iṇḍirayan alone and to none other. This problem whether the reference is specifically to that person requires some examination. The verse in which the specific reference is sought is the one quoted in the ‘Yāpparuṅgala Virutti’ as an illustrative stanza to elucidate Sūtra 4. There are varying versions of this stanza<sup>19</sup>. It may be inferred from this that it is a separate and isolated verse not yet known to belong to any definite and finished work. A guess may therefore be hazarded. This is a stanza in what is technically known as the ‘Ahapporuḷ-Tiṇai’ in Tamil literature. There are other stanzas of the same kind styled ‘Poygai-Vāḱku’ in the ‘Yāpparuṅgala Virutti’ given as illustrations. Whoever the author of these verses was, may it be that he was the author of a work in the ‘Ahapporuḷ’ category, from which these stanzas have been taken? If it be so it is just possible that the work as a whole was lost, some separate stray verses alone having come down to posterity. And it may be that the stanza now under discussion is one such.

We saw how the author of the ‘Yāp. Virutti’ names it ‘Poygai-Vāḱku’. But the instance of the stanza ‘Vaṇḱiveḷiya’ must put us on our guard against accepting it as such. It is for this reason apparently that the learned editor of the Pattuppāṭṭu has labelled this verse along with the other two beginning with ‘Vaṇḱiveḷiya’ and ‘Kākkai Karidu’ merely as time-honoured

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<sup>19</sup>. Compare the Stanza as given in (1) Y.V. p.145. and 518. (2) Puranānūru - 2nd Edn. Dr. V. S. Iyer - p.72, (3) M. Raghava Iyengar Ālvārgal Kālanilai p.29.

Illustrations<sup>20</sup>. Now we come to the specific problem of determining the exact reference in the address 'Tirayavō' in that verse.

The verse has been quoted by the author to illustrate what is termed Tin amil prosody as 'Ezhuuttānandam'. The author explains it thus: 'எழுத்தானந்தமாவது - பாடப்படுவோன் பெயரைச்சார்த்தி எழுத்தளபெழுப்பாடுவது-என்னை-இயற்பெயர் சார்த்தி யெழுத்தளபெழினை, இயற்பாடில்லா யெழுத்தானந்தம் என்று ராதலின்

Furtheron, having quoted the stanza, he observes : இதனுள் 'திரையவோஓ' என்புழி இயற்பெயர்சார்த்தி எழுத்தளபெழுந்தமையான் எழுத்தானந்தம்<sup>21</sup>.

The sense implied in the verse would conform to what is called 'Nāḍaha-Vaḷakku' in Tamil literature. As such 'Tirayavō' implies according to some a direct address by the author of the poem to the patron concerned. In other words a contemporaneity may be established under the circumstances between the author of the verse and the patron addressed.<sup>22</sup>

Now the question arises who is the 'Tiraiyan' referred to in the verse. It may be noted here that it is called a natural name (Iyar-Peyar) by the author of the 'Yāp. Virutti'. The question arises because there

20. Pattuppāṭṭu - Ed. Dr. Swāminatha Iyer - Preface to the 2nd Edition - p.26.

21. Yāp. Virutti - Ed. S. Bhavanandam Pillai - pp. 518-19.

22. Dr. S. K. Ayyaṅgar - Early Hist of Vaiṣṇavism in S. India. PP 68-69.

are atleast more than one of that name known to Tamil literature. Besides *Toṇḍamān Iṇḍiraiyan* we have another 'Tiraiyan' the Lord of Pavattiri.<sup>23</sup> Besides the natural name 'Tiraiyan' may apply to anyone among the descendants of the famous *Toṇḍamān Iṇḍiraiyan* himself. The fact is that the term is a generic one meaning the 'people of the waves' viz., the fisher folk<sup>24</sup>. It may, however, be admitted that this address is here meant to chieftain of the tribe. Only it is difficult to ascertain which particular chieftain it was.

Mahamāhōpadhyaya Dr. V. Swāminatha Iyer concludes his note on '*Toṇḍamān Iṇḍiraiyan*' in a way that precludes the possibility, at any rate in his opinion of any specific reference to him in that verse. For, he sets down the three stanzas beginning with '*Pāḍukō Pāḍuko*' '*Vaṇḱiveṇiya*' and '*Āḷiyiḷaippā*' and says that they all bespeak the glory of his descendants.<sup>25</sup>

Paṇḍit Rāghava Iyeṅgar is also inclined to see the reference to a certain 'Tiraiyan' only in the verse and none to *Toṇḍamān Iṇḍiraiyan* in particular.<sup>26</sup>

The editor of the '*Narraiṇai*' on the other hand would see a specific reference to *Toṇḍamān Iṇḍiraiyan* in the address '*Tiraiyavō*' in that verse.<sup>27</sup> But his

23. *Ahanānūru*:- Ed. Rājagōpala Iyeṅgar - P. 51.

24. P. T. Srīnivāsa Iyeṅgar - History of the Tamils - PP 97, 98. also K. Bālasundara Nāikar, article on '*Iṇḍiraiyan Yār*' - Journal of S. V. Oriental Institute. Tirupati. (XV 2-1954)

25. *Pattuppāṭṭu* - Ed. Dr. V. S. Iyer - 2nd Edn. Preface P. 26.

26. M. Rāghava Iyeṅgar - *Āḷvārgal Kālanilai* P.29.

27. See '*Narraiṇai*' Ed. P. Nārāyanaswāmi Iyer - '*Pādinōr-Varalāru*' P. 7 and Ibid P- 63.

position can be shown to be untenable. In the first place he holds evidently on the basis of the 'Yāp Virutti' that there is only one Poygaiyār in the whole range of Tamil literature.<sup>28</sup> For adequate reasons given above, it has been shown:

(1) That the author of the 'Yāp. Virutti' himself is not quite sure of the identity of the several authors he mentions and

(2) That there is the possibility of more than one Poygaiyar in the history or Tamil literature. He seems to have relied on a doubtful authority for his conclusion. It is far safer to agree with the opinion of Doctor V. S. Iyer and Paṇḍit M Raghava Iyengar for the following reasons.

1) 'Tiraiyan' is a generic name.

2) It can possibly refer to the descendents of Toṇḍamān Iḷandiraiyan

3) Besides Toṇḍamān Iḷandiraiyan there is atleast an equally famous Tiraiyan in Tamil literature. viz., Tiraiyan of Pavattiri.

The conclusion is then borne in upon us that it is difficult to establish the contemporaneity of Poygai Āḷvār with Toṇḍamān Iḷandiraiyan.

If it is difficult to establish the contemporaneity of the Āḷvārs with Iḷandiraiyan on the evidence of that

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28. Ibid P. P. 64-65.

verse, it is much more so to establish the same with "Kōchchenṅaṇān" on the basis of 'Kaḷavazi-Nārpathu', for, this presumes again that the Ālvār Poygai and Poygaiyār the author of the poem are identical. For several reasons, learned opinion inclined at any rate, to doubt the identity seriously<sup>29</sup>.

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29. Among the older generation of Tamil scholars while Dr. V.S. Iyer held that they were different, the editor of 'Narrai' was of opinion that they were one and the same. The latter would assert that there was only one Poygaiyār in Tamil literature. As pointed out before he seems to rely on the evidence of the 'Yāṇ-Virutti' solely for this conclusion. Paṇḍit M. Rāghava Iyengar is inclined to the view that the Ālvār and the author of the 'Kaḷavazi' are one (Ālvargaḷ Kālanilai - P. 28). Does he allow still for doubt when he says:- ஒரு கால்கள வழி பொய்கையாடைப் பற்றிப் முடிவு எத்தகைய தாயினும் யாப்பருங்கல விருத்தியுந் யார் கூறிப் பொய்கையார் ஆழ்வாரின் வேறல்லர் என்பத முன்னோர் கருத்து என்பது ஒருதலை யென்க.

(Ibid P. 28)

The learned editor of the 'Kalittogai' on the other hand is definitely of opinion that the Ālvār and the author of the 'Kaḷvazi' are different persons. He gives reasons for the same. (Kaḷavazi Nārpathu - Ed. E. V. Ananta-rāma Iyer - Preface P. 15) Dr. S. K. Ayyaṅgar would also reject this identity on 'considerations of literary criticism'. Yet properly enough he does not press the point and seems to treat it still as an open question. (Early Hist. of Vaiṣṇavism P. P. 73-74) Paṇḍit M. Venkaṭasāmy Nāṭṭar declares that they were clearly different people. (Sentamil Selvi-Vol. 2 P. ) and so too Mr. Balarāma Iyer of the Annamalai University (Preface to Mānavijayam P-24).



We are not thus in a position to fix the age of Poygai Ālvār definitely on any positive evidence. The literary evidence sought for is not conclusive. It will not be quite safe to assign him on the strength of that evidence to the second century A. D. - the age of the Sangam as at present conceived.

We have now to turn to the first Tiruvandādi itself for guidance. Quite unlike the works of Tirumangai Ālvār it does not give any indication about contemporaries or past events, or mention the achievements of the rulers of the Ālvār's time and generation. Nevertheless, such of the internal evidence as can be gathered from the work enables us to get an idea of the author himself, his mode of life, his devotion etc. Indeed, as will be seen presently, it is a study of the Tamil Andādi literature in general and an examination of the First Tiruvandādi in particular, that will enable us to fix the age of Poygai Ālvār. But here the historian must guard himself against making the literary and stylistic evidence the sole evidence for his chronological conclusions.

At this stage certain facts of the nature of internal evidence collected from the 1st Tiruvandādi by previous writers may be examined. Verse 77 of the work refers among other places to certain place called 'Vinṇagar'. wherein the God is said to be in the sitting posture.<sup>80</sup>

30. வேங்கடமும் வீண்ணகரும் வெஃகாவும்

பூங்கிடங்கி வீள்கோவற் பொன்னகரும்  
நான்கிடத்தும் நின்ருனிருந்தான் கிடந்தான்  
என்றற் கெடுமாமிடர் நடந்தானே

There is another reference to 'Viṇṇagar' in the 3rd Tiruvandādi of Pēyālvār<sup>31</sup>. The author of the 'Tamil Studies' derived the term from 'Viṣṇu-Nagar'<sup>32</sup> while Dr. Hultzch believed it to be a possible derivation from Viṣṇu Gṛha'.<sup>33</sup> Paṇḍiṭ M. Rāghava Ayyaṅgār is also of the latter's opinion.<sup>34</sup>

Dr. S. K. Ayyaṅgār finds no justification in grammar for the kind of coalescence brought about by the combination of the words 'Viṣṇu' 'Nagar' into 'Viṇṇagar'. It would appear that he would reject the other derivation of Dr. Hultzch also. His interpretation of the term as a compound of two words 'Viṇ' and 'Nagar' meaning the 'city of Heaven' is convincing and is borne out by the contrast between 'Viṇṇagaram' the city of Heaven and 'Maṇṇagaram' the city on earth implied in verse 62 of the 3rd Tiruvandādi.

Another interpretation, but not very different from the above may be given. 'Nagar' has been used in Tamil literature in the sense of a temple. நனிமலை சிலம்பில் நல்நகர் வாழ்த்தி<sup>35</sup> This has been explained by the

31. விண்ணகரம் வெஃகா விரிதிரைநீர்  
வேங்கடம்

மண்ணகரம் மாமாட வேணுக்கை

—மண்ணகத்த

தென்குடந்தை தேனார் திருவரங்கம்

தென்கோட்டி

தண் குடந்தை நீரேற்றூன் வாழ்வு.

32. M. Śrīnivāsa Ayyaṅgār - 'Tamil Studies' p. 301.

33.

34. M. Rāghava Ayyaṅgār - 'Aḷvargaḷ Kalanilai' p. 50.

35. 'Tirumuruhāruppāḍai' line 238

commentator thus: செறிந்த மலைப்பக்கத்தாலுள்ள நல்ல ஊர்களை பசியும் பிணியும் பகையும் நீங்குகவென்று வாழ்த்தி He adds: 'நகர்' பிள்ளையார் கோயிலென்னு மாம்<sup>36</sup>

'Nagar' in the sense of a temple has been found to be used in another text also. Line 484 of the 'Maduraik-kānci' begins thus : வயங்குடை நகரத்து etc. The commentator explains it as கோயிலிடத்துச் சேக்கை என் க.<sup>37</sup>

In view of the above usages in the Tamil classics, 'Vin'-'Nagar' may also mean the temple in Heaven. It must be admitted that this interpretation is not very different from the interpretation of the term as the city of Heaven', since both point to the same high seat of God Viṣṇu viz., 'Paramapadam'. It may be noted in passing that the derivation of the term 'Vinṇagar' from 'Vin', 'Nagar is more natural as having been brought about by the combination of the two terms long in use in Tamil literature than the other derivation suggested above. It seems unnecessary to postulate a strained process of more than one stage of transformation from the Sanskrit 'Viṣṇu-Grha' to the Tamil 'Vinṇagar'.

All this discussion regarding the term and its derivation was necessary to understand aright the meaning of the term. It is clear that in the verse referred to it point to a certain place. The question arises: which is that

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36. 'Pattuppāṭṭu' ed. Mm. Dr. V. S. Iyer - 'Naccinārkkiniyar Urai' p. 48.

37. Ibid p. 286

place that has been sung? The author of the 'Tamil Studies' identifies 'Viṇṇagaram' with 'Paramēśwara Viṇṇagaram' at Kānci, and concludes on the basis of Dr. Hultzsch's opinion about the probable date of the construction of the shrine that the Ālvār who sang about it must have flourished in the latter half of the 7th century A.D.<sup>38</sup> That the above identification is groundless has been clearly shown by Dr. S. K. Ayyangār<sup>39</sup> and by Paṇḍit M. Rāghava Ayyangār<sup>40</sup>. The two latter, while thus rejecting the identification of the author of the 'Tamil Studies', would themselves suggest different ones. The former of them states categorically thus: "Coming to the 'Viṇṇagar' under discussion there are five of these in the Cōḷa country in addition to 'Paramēśwara Viṇṇagaram' in Kāñchi. The actual reference here is to Vaikuṇṭha Viṇṇagar near Sīyāḷi in the Tanjore District<sup>41</sup>. He does not however give any reasons for this conclusion."

The latter is of opinion that this 'Viṇṇagaram' should refer to one of three places of that name in the Cōḷa Country<sup>42</sup>. Further on he would suggest the possible identification of the place more particularly with Nandipura-Viṇṇagaram in the Tanjore district. The reasons given for the assertion that the town and the temple must have been built by Nandivarman-I grand-father of

38. M. Srīnivāsa Ayyangār 'Tamil Studies' p. 302.

39. 'Early History of Vaiṣṇavism' pp. 65-66.

40. Ālvargaḷ Kālanilai' p. 51.

41. "Early History of Vaiṣṇavism' p. 66.

42. 'Early History of Voisṇavism' P. 66.

43. M. Bāghava Ayyangār-Ālvargaḷ Kālanilai' P. 51

Simhaviṣṇu are not quite convincing. Whoever it was that founded the Nandipura Viṇṇagaram shrine, there is clearly no reason to assert that it is alone the Vinna-garam referred to in the verse, there being two other places also, unless we also advance sufficient reasons to exclude them.

All this trouble and mistaken identification is the result of taking 'Viṇṇagaram' to refer to a particular shrine. We saw how it simply stands for 'Paramapadam' the abode of Viṣṇu. We have the authority of the great Viṣṇava commentator Periy-Achchan Pillai for that interpretation. He definitely says 'விண்ணகரும்' என்று பரமபதத்தைச் சொல்லுகிறது<sup>44</sup>. and the commentary on verse 62 runs thus: (அவதாரிகை) விண்ணகரும் கேவலம் ஸம்ஸார்த்திலே நின்றமாத்ரமோ, பரமபதத்திலேயிருப்பு மனிச்சுக்காய், தாழ்ச்சியோடே கூடயிருப்பது உகந்தருளன் தேசத்திலேயன்றோ வென்கிறார்<sup>45</sup>. This text of the commentary is further explained in the 'Arumbadam' wherein the term 'மனிச்சுக்கு' is said to mean 'ஹர்ஷத்துக்கு' the 'Arumbadam' adds 'ஸௌ ஜன்யத்துக்காக என்றபடி'. The term தாழ்ச்சி would refer that what is termed in Śrī Vaiṣṇava phraseology as 'Saulabhya', that trait of easy accessibility of God born out of His boundless grace. In other words the commentator states that while the God resides in heaven for his own high pleasure, His presence in earthly shrines is due to his benign grace and solely for the welfare of his devotees.

44. Ibid P. 51, F. N. I.

45. Commentary on verse 77 - 'First Tīruvandādi'.

It is clear therefore, that 'Vinṇagaram' in the verses refers simply to Heaven the abode of Viṣṇu<sup>46</sup>. Indeed, 'Paramapadam' as the abode of Viṣṇu has been sung by the Ālvārs and included in the traditional list of 108 Vaiṣṇava Shrines. The staunch Vaiṣṇava Poet, Piḷlaiperumāl Ayyaṅgar has included it in his work the 'Nūreṭṭu-Tiruppadi-Andādi calling it by the name of 'Tirunādu'<sup>47</sup>. Interpreted in this light 'Arimēya Vinṇagaram' would mean the place very much resembling the city of Heaven where the God Viṣṇu resides. And so too the other 'Vinṇagarams' in the Tanjore District. There is no point therefore in trying to determine the date of Poygai Ālvār and Pēyālvār on the basis of the reference to 'Vinṇagaram' in their works.

There is yet another approach to the subject on the basis of the Tiruvandādi itself which is the only work of the Ālvār in the Nālayiram collection. We saw how the andadi verses of Poygaiyār were quoted by the author of the Yāp. Virutti. The fact that he has used them to illustrate a class of old time metrical composition called Ārṣa (Tam. 'Āriḍam') deserves to be

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46. Prativādi Bhayaṅkaram Aṅṅaṅarācārya also interprets the term in those verses as 'Paramapadam'. He says that it would not be possible to identify 'Vinṇagaram' with the 'Uppiliyappa shrine because the God therein is not in the sitting posture as is described in the verses under references. He would however, add that 'Vinṇagaram' at Kāñci (Divyaprabandha Divyārtha) Dīpikā-Mudal Tiruvandādi verse 77.)

47. ஈரிருபதாஞ்சோழ மீரொன்பதாம் பாண்டி-  
யோர் பதினமூன்றாமலை நாடோரிரண்டாஞ்சீர்நாடா-  
ரோடிரெட்டுத் தொண்டையில் வடநாடாரிரண்டு  
கூறு திருநாடொன்றாகக்கொள்.

noted. For, we cannot fail to infer from this that Poygaiyār and other writers had early come to be recognised as belonging to the older generation of poets in the Tāmil land. Now, the specific question of andādi literature as such, its characteristics and the period of its vogue in the history of Tāmil literature will be of interest.

Andadi as a form of metrical composition was more in vogue in Tāmil literature than in Sanskrit. It is a metrical device, whereby each individual stanza or verse in a particular work is made to begin with the last word or letter-ending of its previous one so as to form a linked series of verses. It has been crisply defined in Yāpparuṅgalak-Kārikai thus :

‘அந்த முதலாத் தொடுப்பதந்தாதி’<sup>48</sup>

The sutra of Yāp. Virutti on ‘Andādit-Toḍai’ runs thus:

‘ஈறு முதலாத்தொடுப்பதந்தாதி. யென்றோதினர்  
மாதோ வுணர்ந்த சிஞோரே’<sup>49</sup>

The author of the ‘Virutti’ gives an elaborate classification on andadi literature as such according to the different ways in which the metrical device is employed.<sup>50</sup>

Commenting on Sutra 239 of ‘Seyyūḷiyal’ Pērāṣiri-yar observes:- ‘புதுவது கிளந்த யாப்பின் மேற்றென்பது  
என்னையெனின் புதிதாகத் தாம் வேண்டியவாற்றூற்

48. Yāpparuṅgalak-Kārikai-sūtra.

49. Yāp. Virutti, Ed. S. Bhavānandam Piḷḷai.

50. Ibid, pp. 183-187, Refer also Sentamīl, Vol. V. P. 272, art by R. Raghava Iyeṅgār.

பல செய்யுளும் தொடர்ந்து வரச்செய்வது. அது முத் தொள்ளாயிரமும் பெரங்கையார் முதலாயினார் செய்த அந்தாதிச் செய்யுளும் எனவுணர்க. It is evident from this that Pērāṣiriyar refers to the Andādi verses as innovations. Besides, it is significant that he should have cited the Andādi verses of Poygaiyar and others as types of this innovation in Tamil prosody. It would appear then that Andādi as a form of literature came into vogue only lately, at any rate later than the Sangam classics. It is generally accepted that Tolkappiyam did not notice the grammar of Andādis. That must have been so for the excellent reason that this kind of literature was non-existent in the time of Tolkāppiyānār. In fact we have only very rare and stray instances of 'Andādi't Toḍai' in the fourth ten of 'Paḍirūppattu' and the eighth ten of 'Aṅṅurunūru' in the whole range of the Sangam collections.

In the light of the foregoing we won't be far wrong in saying that the author of the First Tiruvandādi must have flourished not exactly during the Sangam age but later when strict literary conventions were first beginning to change and newer forms like the Andādis were beginning to be composed. This, however, should not be construed to mean that he came much later in the history of Tamil literature. Far from it; the Andādi compositions of Poygaiyar and others have been cited as examples by commentators Pērāṣiriyar and Naccinār-kiniyar. We may therefore conclude that Poygai Āḷvār must have lived just after the Sangam age i.e. about the 4th or 5th century, A.D.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE CONTEMPORANEITY OF THE MUDAL-ĀLVARS

The Mudal-Ālvārs as the term indicates were traditionally the first group of saints who were born into this world as the 'Amśas' of Vishnu for the redemption of mankind. The traditional biographies and other kindred works give an account of these three Ālvārs together. The date of the first of them Poygaiyār having been already discussed, that of the other two may now be considered. The Ārayirappaḍi has it that Pūḍattālvār was born the next day after the birth of Poygai in Avittā (Tam-அவிட்டம்) Naksatra in the month of ஜப்பசி. The very next day after that saw the avatara of Pēyālvār<sup>1</sup>. The cyclic and the Kali years, as has already been observed are not given.

The Sanskrit work D. S. Charitam also gives only the month and the asterism in which these two were born<sup>2</sup> The 'Upadēśa-Rattinamālai' of Varavaramuni

1. 'அந்தரம்.....பூதத்தாழ்வார்.....திருக்கடல் மல்லையிலே திவ்யமாயிருப்பதொரு மாதவிப்பூவிலே அந்த ஜப்பசி மாஸத்திலே அவிட்ட நக்ஷத்திரத்திலே அவதரித்தருளினார் - Ar-G-Prabharvam ed S. Krishnamachairi P. P-7-8.

2. मासे घतस्मिन्वसुवे चनिष्ठपारेसमुद्रं पुरि मल्लनाभ्याम् ।  
नीलोत्पलान्तादसुवि भूतनामा कौमोदकी शक्तिमयोमुनीन्द्र ॥  
तन्मसएवाविरभूद्विषमिधत् प्राचेतर..... मयूरपुण्याम् ।  
महाभिधाने लतिका दान्तात् श्रीनन्दकात्मा मबिकैरवान्तात् ॥

—D. S. Charitam - Sarga - I

gives the same details regarding the birth of these Ālvārs as also the 'Vāzhittirunāmaṁ' compositions of Appiḷḷai<sup>3</sup>. The Guruparamparā Prabhāvam of the Tṛtīya-Bṛhma-Tantra Swatantra-Jiyar, while agreeing with the above adds the cyclic and the Kali Years for the avatara of Pūdattār and Peyār. Thus for instance it is stated that the former was born in the year Siddhārti 862901 of Dwāpara Yuga. The pretended accuracy and minuteness, of detail given in this work have been already needed discussed and no more elaborate discussion on them is here.

The 'Sannidhi Guruparampara' naturally follows the account given in the work of Brahma-Tantra-Swatantra-Jiyar in every respect and is a very recent production.

The traditional account of the lives of these Ālvārs as given in the earlier biographies and later works do not give us any lead in their matter of fixing their age. The main points to note here are their avatara at Kāñci, Kaḍal-Mallai and Mayilai respectively, and their meeting at Tirukkovalur with Tirumaḷisai Āzhvār (Sam - Bhakti-sara).

Apart from the inscription in the 'Aruḷāḷap-Perumaḷ' temple at Kāñci already noticed, there is hardly any other epigraphical evidence concerning the

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3. ஐப்பசியில் திருமூலத்தவரித்தான வாழியே (Pūdattār) 'சிறந்தவைப்பசியில் சதயம் சனித்த வண்ணல் வாழியே (Peyār)

dates of these Ālvārs. Even there it must be noted that mention is only made of Poygaiyār and Pūdattār, and Peyālvār is left out of account.

There are a few references to them in literature which are, however, vague and indifferent from the point of view of chronology. We saw how the commentator Pērāṣiriyar in this commentary on the 'Tolkāppiyam' refers to the Andādi verses of 'Poygaiyār and others', which seems very much to imply the other two Pūdattār and Pēyār also. But the implication, be it noted, is only in respect of their Andādi compositions and not by any means in respect of the times in which they lived. In other words, we cannot infer from that phrase anything more than the fact that Poygaiyār and others were authors of Andādis.

Again, the 'Yapp-Virutti' quotes a verse as an illustration for the class of poetic composition called 'Ārṣa' (Tam-Āridam) and ascribes it to the joint authorship of Pūdattār and Karaikāl-Pēyār. At a very generous estimate this can lead to the inference that they were both contemporaries, which however, does not help us very far in fixing the age of Pūddataḷvār. We are not in a position to ascertain the age of the poets with anything like accuracy.

Nor does the quotation of a verse as 'Pūdattār Avaiyaḍakku' by the commentators Pērāṣiriyar and Naccinārkinīyar help us in that direction. At best we can infer from this that the Ālvār must have belonged to the older generation of poets in our country.

The late Mr. T. Gōpinātha Rao assigned the middle of the 7th Century A. D. to the Mudal-Ālvārs on the basis of the reference to Māmallai, the birth place of Pūdattālvār in his own work, the 2nd 'Tiruvandādi'. He believed that Māmallai must be none other than the famous town of Mahāmallapuram built by Narasimha Varman-I Mahāmalla, and that therefore the Alvar who referred to the town must have come after him<sup>4</sup>. The mistaken assumption on which the above conclusion was based has been effectively criticised by Dr. S.K. Ayyaṅgār and Paṇḍit M. Rāghava Ayyaṅgār<sup>5</sup>. It is not necessary to go over the whole ground over again here.

It is also clear how references to 'Viṇṇagaram' in the 'Third Tiruvandādi' of Pēyālvār cannot help us in any way in that 'Viṇṇagaram' in these verses stands for 'Paramapadam' and cannot be identified with any other place on earth

In the absence of any positive evidence internal or external, literary, traditional or epigraphic, we are again forced to rely on the one indisputable fact viz. That the only works of Pūdattār and Pēyār in the whole range of the four thousand verses (Nālāyira-Divyaprabandham) are the 'Second and 3rd Tiruvandādis'. As in the case of Poygaiyār references to their verses as 'Ārṣā', quotations of them in the commentaries and in works on prosody, and above all their undeniable richness and classic harmony must point to the fact that they belonged to above the fourth or fifth Century A. D. when the

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4 'History of Sri Vaiṣṇavās' P . 16

5 M. Raghava Ayyaṅgār - Ālvārgal-Kala Nilai

strict literary conventions had begun to change and newer forms like the 'Andādīs' were beginning to be composed in the Tamil country

In the foregoing discussions on the dates of the Mudal Ālvārs we noted how all the traditional accounts were persistent with regard to one point namely, their contemporaneity. This is in fact one of the very few problems connected with the history of the Ālvārs on which there has been complete unanimity of opinion.

The author of the 'Tamil Studies' in his discussion on the age of Mudal Ālvārs seems to rely on tradition which says they were contemporary. For, after identifying 'Viṇṇagaram' sung by Poygaiyār and Pēyār with Paramēśwara Viṇṇagaram at Kāñci and further establishing that they must have lived in the latter half of the 7th Century A. D. on the basis of Dr. Hultzh's assertion that the temple must have been built in 690 A. D., he assigns these - all the three - to that age. In other words, having decided the age of two of them on the basis of the reference to Viṇṇagar in their works he assigns them all to the same age evidently relying on tradition as to their contemporaneity. To make the point clearer his own words may be quoted:-

"It is believed by some scholars that Poygai-Ālvār was no other than the author of Kaḷvajī'. If there was any truth in this supposition the first three saints must have lived during the reign of the Coḷa King Kōchengaṇān, viz. prior to the 6th Century A. D."<sup>6</sup>

‘According to Dr. Hultzh Paramēśwara Viṇṇagaram was built by the Pallava King Paramēśvara Varman-II (A.D. 690) These three Ālvārs should therefore have flourished in the latter half of the 7th Century A.D.”<sup>7</sup>.

Dr. S. K. Ayyaṅgār in his ‘Early History of Vaiṣṇavism in S. India’ observes:—

“I believe I am warranted in ascribing the 2nd Century A. D. as the age of Poygai-Ālvar. The comment of Pērāśiriyar already quoted refers to the Andādi verses of ‘Poygaiyār and others; a description which implies the two others Pūdattār and Pēyālvar at any rate. This connection of the three is borne out by the similarity of style and sentiment which is very close indeed among the three ‘Andādīs’. We might then ascribe these early Ālvārs to the 2nd Century A.D., the age of Iṇdirayan, Nālan-Kiḷi, and Senguṭṭuvan”<sup>8</sup>.

It is evident from the above quotation that the learned author means ‘contemporaneity by the term ‘connection’. Therein he establishes the contemporaneity of the Mudal-Ālvārs on the basis of Pērāśiriyar’s words ‘பொய்கையார் முதலாயினார் அந்தாதிச் செய்யுள்களும்’ and then points to the ‘close similarity of style and sentiment’ in their works as bearing out that ‘connection’. It may be noted, however, that no such connection between the Mudal-Ālvārs can be established on that basis alone. It is true that the phrase implies

7. Ibid P. 302.

8. Dr. S. K. Ayyaṅgār – Early History of Vaiṣṇavism. P. 75.

among other the two Pādattār and Pēyār. But the connection between the three suggested by the phrase is more in respect of their Andādi Compositions than in respect of time. In other words, the only inference possible from the commentator's phrase is, that all of them sang Andadi Prabandhams and no more. If we seek to infer contemporaneity of the authors from that phrase we may have to conclude that all the Andādi writers were contemporaries. That cannot be. It is therefore clear that the contemporaneity of the Mudal-Ālvārs cannot be established on that basis. The point, however, to note is that he has also relied on tradition as to their contemporaneity.

The late Mr. T.A. Gōpinātha Rao fixes the date of Pādattālvār on the basis of his reference to Māmallai in his 'Tiruvandādi' and assigns all the three of them to that date. He declares that they were contemporary - in the sense of having lived together in the same period - contemporary in exactly the same sense in which the Guruparamaparās and the D.S. Caritam would have it. He observes:-

"Mahāmalla lived in the middle of the 7th Century, and therefore, Bhutattālvār and his contemporaries may be assigned to a period not later than the 7th Century of the Christian era".

"The earliest of the Ālvārs, Pēyālvār, Bhūtattālvār and Poykai Ālvār ..... and also their contemporary Tirumaḷisai etc<sup>9</sup>."

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9. T. A. Gōpinātha Rao - History of Śrī Vaiṣṇavās. p. 16.

The same position has been taken by Pandit Raghava Ayyaṅgar when he says :— “பொய்கையார் முதலாயினார் அந்தாதிகள் என்பதனால் பூதத்தார் பேயார் அந்தாதிகளும் தழுவப்பட்ட செய்தி விளங்கும். ஆதலால் முதலாழ்வார்களது அருளிச் செயல்களையே அவ்வுரைக்காரர்கள் குறிப்பிடுதல் தெளிவாம்.” Further on “இவ்வரலாற்றினின்றும் முதலாழ்வார் மூவரும் திருமழிசைப்பிரானுக்கு ஆண்டிலும் அறிவிலும் முதிர்ந்தவர்கள் என்பதும் தெரியலாம்.” Still further “அதனால் இப்பெரியார் (திருமழிசை) 6, 7 நூற்றாண்டுகளின் பின் முன்பகுதிகளிலும் இவர்களுக்கு முத்தவர்களும் முக்காலமும் உணர்ந்த இருடிகளுமான முதலாழ்வார் மூவரும் 5, 6 நூற்றாண்டின் பின் முன்பகுதிகளிலும் எழுந்தருளியிருந்தவர்கள் என்பதில் எவ்விதத் தடையும் நிகழ இடமில்லை” He concludes “ஆகவே செங்கண்ணா வாழ்ந்த அந்நூற்றாண்டே பொய்கையார் முதலியவர்க்கும் ஏற்றதாதல் கண்டுகொள்க.

It would appear then that all the writers on the subject have admitted impliedly atleast the contemporaneity of the Mudal-Ālvars and that in almost all cases they have relied mainly on tradition for doing so. We are justified in this inference in the absence of any discussion in their works on this point and in the absence of any other evidence given by them to establish the contemporaneity.

Now, this contemporaneity tradition may be examined. It says that the Ālvars Poygai, Pūdam and Pēy met at Tirukkōvalūr. There are several versions regarding that incident. Pinbaḷagiya Jiyar's account says that they after having wandered long without any knowledge



of each other, met together quite accidentally in a certain sacred pial at Tirukkōvalūr. It is said that God Himself was responsible for their meeting thus, in that He brought them together for the benefit of mankind. It is also definitely stated that they experienced the presence of God through their minds' eye.

The D. S. Caritam mainly follows the Jīyar's narrative with occasional Kāvya embellishments. Later works have added to the original version in several details. For instance, as regards the central point of the meeting place itself it is simply a 'Tiruvīḍaikaji' viz., a certain sacred pial in the Jīyar's work while in the later accounts it becomes definitely the pail of the Aśramam of Mṛgaṇḍu to which the saints repaired for shelter.<sup>10</sup> We are also given a graphic account of the conversation that ensued just after they met. It may be noted in passing that Praṇannāmṛtam gives the name 'Dēhaḷi Nagara' to Tirukkōvalūr. We are able to see from careful study of the above versions different from each other in detail that tradition has grown by several stages with gradual additions to it.

It is useful to enquire at this stage if there is anything of the nature of internal evidence to support this account of the meeting of the Mudal-Ālvārs. Sometimes verse 86 of the First Tiruvandādi is cited as that. An examination of the meaning of that verse will show that it has no connection at all with the fanciful and imaginary stories of the hagiologists and that its meaning would be clear without any the least reference to them.

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10. See the Pannīrayirappaḍi Version.

Now an enquiry into the nature of this verse as internal evidence requires in its turn an enquiry into the exact connotation of the term 'Idaikali in that verse.

In the history of the every literature, it is commonly observed in the evolution of words and word construction that some of them change their meaning and significance and some their structure and form through lapse of time. There are others that, having been in vogue fall into disuse for some reason or other both in the spoken and the written form. To the second category more than the first, can be said to belong the word 'Idaikali'. Mm. Dr. V. Sāminātha Iyer has specifically stated and included it in the list of rare words occurring in the 'Purāṇānūru'. The text in which the word occurs in that work runs as follows:

.....மென்னியான் மறவின் மறக்குவள் வென்வேல்  
வின்பொரு நெடுங்குடைக் கொடித்தே ரோரியர்  
திண்கதிர் த்திகிரி திரிதரக் குறைத்த வுலகவிடைகழி  
யறைவாய் நிலை இய etc. etc. etc.

The learned editor's translation of the above passages runs thus:— 'வென்றிலே வலையுடைய விசும்பைத் தோயும் நெடிய குடையினையும் கொடியணிந்ததே தரினையும் உடைய, நிலமுழுதுமாண்ட வேந்தரது திண்ணிய ஆர் குழந்தை சக்ரமியங்குதற்குக் குறைக்கப்பட்ட வெள்ளி மலைக்கு அப்பாலாகிய உலகத்திற்குக் கழியும் இடைகழியாக அற்றவாயின்கண்'.

In the above translation the word is evidently said to refer to a causeway or passage (Tam. Vayil) situated between two localities. In the glossary adjoined to the

work, however, the word 'Idaikali' is not found, probably because it has been sufficiently explained in the body of the translation of the main text quoted above. The word occurs in another Tamil classic in the following passage:-

‘....வில்கொளிச் சிலாதலந்தொழுது வலங்கொண்டு  
மலைதலைக்கொண்ட பேர்யாறு போலது  
மலகவிடைகழி யொருங்குட னீங்கி.....’ etc. etc.

The ‘Arumbadavurai’ which has also been edited along with the main text by the learned Mahamahōpadhyāya and whose authorship is unknown interprets the phrase ‘Ulaka-Idaikali’ (உலகவிடைகழி) as the passage through which the people passed. (உலகத்தாரெல் லாரும் போகலான ஊர்வாயில்). The unknown author has taken care to add that it has been so interpreted because of its situation between street-rows (தெரு வொழங்கு இடையேகழிதலாஸ் இடைகழி), thereby explaining the significance of the word and its import. Adiyārku-Nallār, whose commentary has also been edited in the same work uses the word ‘Idaikali’ in the course of his commentary on lines 5 to 8 in the sense of a gateway or ‘Vāyil’. He qualifies the word ‘Idaikali’ as one that has doors (கதவையுடைய இடைகழி). Later still in his commentary on lines 26, 27 he follows the author of the ‘Arumbadavurai’ in interpreting ‘Ulaka-Idaikali’ as (Urvāyil). He has also added the note ‘இடையே கழிதலின் அவ்வாயில் இடைகழியாயிற்று<sup>11</sup>.

11. Silappadikāram, Ed. Dr. V. Swāminātha Iyyer, 1920, pp. 271.

Jivaka Cintāmaṇi is another classic in which we find the word used in one of the verses.

புடையிரு குழையுமின்னப் பூந்துகில் செறிந்தவய்கு  
னடையறி மகளிரேந்த நல்லமதர் துண்ணும்போழ்தி  
னிடைகழி நின்றவெள்ளை நோக்கிப் போந்தே

லுகென்றான்  
கடல்கெழ பருதியென்ன பொற்கலத் தெனக்கு

மிட்டார்.<sup>12</sup>

In the above verse 'Idaikali' is found to signify the place located midway between the front pial and the inner court yard of an Indian house. That it is so has been indicated clearly in the glossary.<sup>13</sup>

It must now be clear that the term 'Idaikali' in tamil literature has always been used with a particular significance, viz., to denote a place situated midway between two other localities. In the light of all this, the meaning of verse 86 of the First 'Tiruvandādi' may now be ascertained. The verse is as follows:

நீயும் திருமகனும் நின்றாயால் குன்றெடுத்துப்  
பாயும் பனிமறைத்த பண்பாளா — வாசல்  
கடைகழியா உள்புகாக்காமர் பூங்கோவல்  
இடைகழியே பற்றியினி.<sup>14</sup>

12. Jivaka Cintāmaṇi – Nāmaḥaḥ Ilambagam, verse 399, Ed. Dr. V. S. Iyyer, pp. 126.

13. Ibid pp. 659.

14. Nalāyiram, Iyarpā, Mudal – Tiruvandādi, verse 86 Ed. S. Krishnamāchārya, pp. 26.

'Idaikai' in the above verse is tacked on to 'Kōval' both together constituting 'Kōval-Idaikai' as in 'மதிட்கோவ லிடைகழியாயனை

Taking these passages into consideration, 'Idaikai' obviously refers to a place in 'Kōval'. Since the place is one in which the Ālvār says God stood along with His consort Lakshmi, it must clearly refer to the temple in the locality. That it should be so will be seen when we try to make out the meaning of the phrase மதிட்கோவ லிடைகழியாயனை. The phrase should naturally mean மதில் களால் சூழ்ந்த கோவலில் உள்ள இடைகழியில் விளங்கும் ஆயனை (கோபாலனை).

And it must be clear that the temple in 'Kōval' came to be called 'Idaikai' in view of its situation, as in fact 'Ūrvail' has been styled 'Ulaga Idaikai', in 'Silapadikāram' and 'ரேழி' has been called merely as 'Idaikai' in Jivaka Cintāmaṇi. In much the same way 'கோவலூர் மன்னும் இடைகழியெம்மாயவனை' should mean 'கோவலூரில் நிலைபெற்ற இடைகழியில் வர்த்திக் கிற ஸ்ரீ மஹாவிஷ்ணுவை. Now, the question arises- Cannot we take it that the word 'Idaikai' has been narrowed down in its import with the lapse of time to denote only the pial of a house and that it is only in that sense that is used in the first 'Tiruvandādi'. In fact the Tamil Lexicon says that the term stands for இடைக் கட்டுள ரேழி; The Sanskrit equivalent देहली is also given and the self-same verse 86 of the first Tiruvandādi has been cited as an illustration for the usage.<sup>15</sup>

This contention is easily answered. There is no question of the narrowing down of the significance of the word with the lapse of time. For, we are now examining its usage in early Tamil literature and not its later usage. As a matter of fact, the term was mostly used only in the classics and was very soon out of vogue. The learned Editor of the 'Purāṇānūru' has definitely included it in the list of rare words. Besides, we must not forget the fact that in certain contexts the word means **கோயில்** even in its usage in the older classics as in *Jīvaka Cintāmaṇi*.

The point to note is this. Whatever the nature of the work in which the words may occur, old or new, the meaning must be understood with reference to the particular context. In the passages noted above, the term referred to **ஊர்வாயில்** with reference to a village or town, and to a **கோயில்** with reference to a house according to the context. Looked at this way, the term 'Kōval-Idaikali' in the verse can possibly refer to the temple of that place only and to no other. In the compound word Kōval Idaikali 'Kōval' stands for the city of Tirukkōvalūr and 'Idaikali' is the temple situated in it. Such compounds signifying the temple and the city or the locality in which it is situated are common currency in the Tamil land.<sup>16</sup>

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16. A few examples may be given:— **\*திருவரங்கம் பெரியகோயில்** - கச்சி திருவெஃகா — **திருவாரூர் பூங்கோவில்** - திருச்செங்குன்றூர் **திருச்சிற்றூறு-கருர்ஆநிலை கோவலூர் வீரட்டானம்** - **கொடுங்கோளுர்ஞ்சைக்களம்**.

Above all, there is striking epigraphical evidence to confirm the foregoing. Dr. Hultzsch, noticing the 'Fourteen inscriptions of Tirukkōvalūr writes as follows:-

"The sacred writings of the Śaivas and the Vaiṣṇavas of the Tamil country mention both of the Tirukkōvalūr temples. Tiruḡṇana sambandar refers to the temple as 'Virattanam at Kōvalūr and Tirumaṅgai Ālvār to the Viṣṇu temple as 'Idaikaḷi at Kōvalūr'. The subjoined Inscriptions have the forms 'Tiruvīrattānam' (A.J.) and 'Tiruvīdaikaḷi' (K) or 'Idaikaḷi' (L)."<sup>17</sup>

We see how the temple is called 'Idaikaḷi' merely or 'Tiruvīdaikaḷi' in the inscriptions, evidently following the name given to it by Poygai Ālvār and Tirumaṅgai and the name in common use. For the sake of clearness, that portion of the text wherein the temple is referred to may be given:

".....Tirukkōvalūranā, Śrī Madurāntaka-  
Sādurvēdi Maṅgalattu-Tiruvīdaikaḷi (Ā)lvār Śrīvi(m)  
ānam.....etc., etc. (K)<sup>18</sup>

Again in the inscription of Rāma Narasimha (L)  
".....Kōval Idaikaḷiyil aṅḡey Kārungarappaḍi aindu  
śemborkuḍam.....etc. etc.<sup>19</sup>.

These clear and unmistakeable references to the temple at Tirukkōvalūr as 'Tiruvīdaikaḷi' and Kōval-Idaikaḷi' in inscriptions must clear all doubts finally as

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18. Epigraphia Indica, Vo. 8, Inscription of Rājendra, P. 145.

19. Ibid.

regards the meaning of the words in verse 86 of the first Tiruvandadi. That being so, the interpretation of that word as *சேழி* in that context and the traditional story based on that interpretation must fall to the ground.

It may yet be argued that it is only by its association with tradition that the temple itself came to be called 'Idaikaḷi' in the inscriptions. But the answer is clear that it cannot be so for the simple reason that the inscription is dated in 1058 and we have the first glimpses of the tradition only about two centuries later. One cannot, therefore, see any possibility of interpreting the word in view of the tradition. 'Idaikaḷi' in the inscriptions and therefore also in common usage long before them and after, is the temple without any reference at all to a later-day legend. It is highly interesting to note in this connection that there is a Saiva Shrine of the name of 'Tiruvīdaikkaḷi'<sup>20</sup>.

There is no difference practically between 'Tiruvīdaikkaḷi' and 'Tiruvīdaikaḷi' in meaning. Tiruvīdaikkaḷi is the name of the shrine irrespective of any tradition of this kind to support it, and very probably by virtue of its situation only. Much in the same way and quite consistent with its classical usage as a causal name (*காரணப் பெயர்*). The term should have referred to the temple at Tirukkōvalūr.

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20. தேனமர் பொழில் சூழ் திருவிடைக்கழியிற்றி  
ருக்குர நீழற்கீழ் நின்ற கோளமர் கூத்தன் குலவிளங்  
களிறென் கொடிக்கிடர் பயப்பதுங்குணமே - Verse 4  
Sēdan Tiruviśaippā.



Yet another fact that may be noted in passing is that the country between Tonḍaimaṇḍalam and Cōḷamaṇḍalam usually called the 'Naḍu Nāḍu' covering for the most part the North and South Arcot districts is known to literature and epigraphy as 'Tirumunaippāḍi Nāḍu' and 'Iḍaikaḷi Nāḍu'. Its headquarters seems to have been Kōval.

We have thus been able to see that verse 86 of the first Tiruvandādi cannot support any part of the traditional story of the meeting of the Mudal Ālvārs. We cannot take it that they met in the pial of a house, because it is based on a wrong interpretation of the text as its basis and then worked up be sheer imagination.<sup>21</sup> Nor can we have it that they met in the 'Iḍaikaḷi' itself taking it to mean the temple in its proper interpretation and argue that tradition might still hold good. For, in evaluating tradition, we must take great care to base our arguments and conclusions on just what it says and no more. And in this particular case, nowhere has it been given to us that they met in the temple at Tirukkōvalūr. Pinpaḷagiya Jīyar says:— ..ஓருநாள் ராத்திரியிலே இம்மூவரையும் சீரேறு மறையாளர் நிறைந்த செல்வத் திருக்கோவலூரிலே, ஒரு திருவிடைகழியிலே...ஸங்கத ராக்க Etc. Etc.<sup>22</sup> The use of the indefinite article 'ஒரு' precludes the possibility of interpreting 'ஒரு திருவிடை கழி' in that text as the temple of the place. It means

21. It is an instance of a literary text (in this case its misinterpretation) that has given rise to traditional story. It is definitely not an instance of tradition embodied in literature.

22. Ārayirappaḍi, Ed. S Kṛṣṇamāchārya, p. 9.

'at a certain pial'. The D. S. Caritam closely following the Jīyar's account says also that they were made to meet in a narrow pial.

श्रोवामनक्षेत्रपुरे कदाचित्  
 संयोज्यशौरि भगवानकस्मात्  
 .. नम्रविष्ट निशि कल्पयित्वा  
 प्रावेशयत्संकटदेहलीन्तान् ॥

Later works point to the pial of the āsramam of Mṛgaṇḍu and so on. Under no circumstances can we modify tradition, for that will amount to our own creation.

Above all, it must be remembered that there is not even a single piece of evidence for the meeting at Tirukkōvalūr. If the experience of the Mudal Āḷvārs was true, it is natural to expect some references to the incident in their works. It is also reasonable to expect the other Āḷvārs to have indirectly at least alluded to this incident either when they referred to them generally or when they sang about the God at Tirukkōvalūr in particular. Tirumaṅgai Āḷvār in his Periya Tirumōḷi has dedicated full ten majestic verses to the shrine to Kōval and there is not the slightest reference to this tradition in them. Tradition as embodied in the various guru-paramparās then, is baseless and therefore an unreliable evidence for the contemporaneity of the Mudal Āḷvārs.

Turning now to the verse of the Āḷvārs themselves, we saw how a study of Andādi literature in general helped us to determine the age of Poygai Āḷvār. Much in the same way, and again within only very broad limits can we assign Poygaiyār, Pūdattar and Pēyār to about the 5th

Century A D., in view of the first flush of Andādi literature during that period in the Tamil Land. The sentiments they expressed and the tenor of religion that runs through their works show that they belonged to the early generation of hymnists in our country.

## CHAPTER V

### TIRUMALISAI ĀLVĀR

This Ālvār takes his name after the place of his birth called Tirumaliśai, (Mahīsāra Kshētra in Sanskrit.) Born as he was according to tradition under peculiar circumstances to a Rishi and an ordinary mortal, he cannot be assigned to any one of the traditional castes strickly so called. This seems to be reflected in one of his own verses in one of his works the 'Tiruccanda-Viruttam'<sup>1</sup>. This should not, however, be taken to mean that he was an out-caste in the ordinary sense of the term. A Ṛshi-putra himself, he had all the Brahminic culture in him as is fully evidenced by his works. Only, he was not a Brahmin in the sense of having undergone the Brahmaṇa Samskāra or in the sense of having undergone the ritual of regular intiation into it.

As usual, the two early works, The Ārayirappaḍi and the D. S. Caritam give only the Nakṣatra and the month in which the Ālvār was born<sup>2</sup>. The much later work of the Bṛhmatantra Swatantra Jīyar gives what looks like a more precise date when it says that he was born in the

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1. Verse-90- 'குலங்களாயவீரி ரண்டிலொன்றிலும்  
பிறந்திலேன்.

2. Guruparamparā Prabhāvam Ed. by the Śrī Vaiṣṇava Mudrāpaka Sabha P. 41. See Appendix for the D. S. Caritam sloka on the avatara of the Ālvār.

year Siddhārti, the year 86,2961 of Dvāpara Yuga in the month of 'Tai' in the dark half month in the asterism Makha. This serves no useful purpose.

Now one thing is clear. Tradition, as embodied in the Guruparamparās and the Upadēśa Rattinamāli and such other traditional works point out that Tirumaliśai Ālvār is the fourth in the line of Ālvārs in their chronological order<sup>3</sup>. The former, in the course of the life history of the Ālvār mention the meeting of Tirumaliśai and the Mudal-Ālvārs at a certain stage in their wonderings, as an important event in his life. In fact it is pointed out how on another occasion it was Pēyālvar that converted him from the Śaiva to the Vaiṣṇava faith. On the strength of this evidence it is generally held that Tirumaliśai must have been a contemporary, at least some period of his life with the Mudal Ālvārs<sup>4</sup>.

Tradition again points out that the Ālvār had something to do with a Pallava Ruler of Kāñci. More particularly he is associated with the shrine at 'Vehka' on the outpost of that city. The Pallavas began to rule over Kāñci and Tondamandalam from about the middle of the third Century A. D. and not earlier. Taking it for granted that it was one of the early Pallavas with whom the Ālvār was associated we may fix the upper limit of his age to be somewhere about the beginning of the 4th Century A. D.

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3. 'பொய்கையார் பூதத்தார்பேயார் புகழ்மழிசை ஐயன்' Upadēśa Rattinamālai.

4. See M. Raghava Ayyaṅgar. Ālvargaḷ Kalanilai 1st Edn. P. 35.

The Ālvār's works, the Tiruccanda Viruttam and the Nānmugan Tiruvandādi reveal state of religion and religious conflict in the Tamil land quite different from that revealed in the compositions of the Mudal-Ālvārs. It is of course granted that much of the hostility revealed may after all be the reflex of the author's own temperament, particularly in view of the fact that tradition makes Tirumaliśai a convert to Vaiṣṇavism after long and varied experiences in other faiths including Śaivism; and converts generally are greater enthusiasts than the traditionalists themselves. Nevertheless we cannot fail to see in these two works an altered state of religious relations in the Tamil Country from that of the times of the Muda-Ālvārs. It seems necessary therefore, to postulate the lapse of a few generations atleast between the age of the Mudal-Ālvārs and that of Tirumaliśai and assign him to about the latter half of the 5th or the 6th Century A. D.

Before concluding, it is worthwhile noticing another view in respect of the age of this Ālvār, which makes him definitely the contemporary of Mahendra Varman Pallava, who bore the sur-name 'Guna-Bhara'. This is sought to be established by interpreting the poet's address 'கோனே! குணபரனே'. In verse 93 of his 'Nānmugan-Tiruvandādi' in some such manner as follows: True it is that the address in the verse is definitely to Viṣṇu and to no monarch living or dead. Yet, why of all the names of the great God should the particular name 'Guna-Bhara' be chosen for affectionate address by the Ālvār, unless it be that he was prompted to do so by the surname of the reigning monarch.

Scholars would further justify the presumption by holding that it was verily with a purpose that the mode of address was chosen, namely to show that such appellations were properly due to Gods alone and by no means to ordinary mortals, kings though they were<sup>5</sup>. Passages with a similar implication have been quoted to substantiate the argument. Nevertheless one feels that the synchronism should rest on a firmer basis. As it is, the argument advanced to make the Alvar a contemporary of Mahendra Varman Pallava who ruled Cir. 600 A. D. is not quite convincing.

We are left then without any certain basis for fixing the age of this Ālvar. There is no difficulty, however in accepting that he must have flourished a few generations after the age of the Mudal-Ālvārs, say about the latter half of the 5th or early in the 6th Century A.D. when history reveals a state of religious strife in the Tamil Country. Several passages can be cited from his works which bear ample testimony to this fact.

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5. M. Raghava Ayyangār. Ālvargaḷ Kalanilai-1st Edr. P. 36-37.

## CHAPTER VI

### KULASĒKHARA ĀLVĀR

It is perhaps strange that of all matters connected with the lives of the Vaiṣṇava Saints, the identification of the birth place of Kulaśekhara should still remain vague and present a problem for discussion. Considering that he was not a mere saint but also a monarch, one would expect even from the point of view of tradition, greater definiteness about his life than about the lives of the other Ālvārs. Be that as it may, we have to discuss this problem, and it is not without its difficulties.

As the outset, the evidence from pure tradition may be examined. Pinbaḷagiya Jiyar says definitely that Kulaśekhara was born in 'Kollinagar'. The description of this 'Kollinagar, as a 'Tiruppaḍai-Viḍu<sup>1</sup>, viz., the seat of the army or a fortified and garrisoned city, must show that it was in all probability his capital also. We find that this is quite in keeping with the Ālvār's own words referring to himself in certain passages of the 'Perumāḷ-Tirumōḷi<sup>2</sup>. The manner in which the Ālvār refers to his overlordship over certain places in these passages shows clearly that 'Kollinagar' was his capital city. Taken

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1. Ār. Guruparamparā Ed. S.Krishṇamācārya p.22

2. One such passage deserves particular notice.  
கொல்லி காவலன் கூடல் நாயகன் கோழிக்கோன் குல  
சேகரன் Perumāḷ-Tirumōḷi 2nd ten V. 10.



along with 'Kōḷṭ', and 'Kūḍal' the traditional inland capitals of the Cōḷa and the Pāṇḍāya kingdoms respectively, one cannot escape the conclusion that Kollinagar was the traditional Cēra capital according to the Āḷvār. But where was this capital? How did it get this name? are all questions that suggest themselves at once. The name 'Kollinagar' implies the very apparent suggestion that it was a city adjoining the Kolli Hills. References to 'Kolikkūrṅam' in South Indian Epigraphy would show that a particular region was named after the Kolli Hills. Similarly it is not improbable that Kollinagar came to be so called after the name of the Hills and the region because of its nearness to them. It has sometimes been suggested in support of this hypothesis that the name 'Kollikkaṇṇan' as referring to Kaṇṇan of Kolli clearly points to the fact that there was a city of the name of 'Kolli'.<sup>3</sup> But as pointed out before, it can point to the region as well in which case it would be equally intelligible as referring to the Kaṇṇan of the Kolli Region. However it is, Kollinagar, generally speaking, can be said to signify an important city adjoining the hills. And the capital of the Cēras adjoining Kolli was certainly the modern Karūr according to all reliable literary and traditional testimony<sup>4</sup>. But then, it is difficult to ignore Vēdānta Dēśika and Varavara-Muni, two great Vaiṣṇava traditionalists who definitely say that the birth place of

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3. M. Raghava Ayyangar - 'Ālvargaḷ Kālanilai - 2nd Edn. p. 165.

4. R. Raghava Iyengar - Vaṇḍimanagar.

the Ālvar was 'Tiruvāṇjikkaḷam'.<sup>5</sup> The two place names Kollinagar and Tiruvaṇjikkaḷam seem so different from each other as to make us either reject the testimony of the Ācāryās as late and unreliable tradition or posit that of the two places one was the capital and the other his birth place.

The name 'Tiruvaṇjikkaḷam' itself may be examined with a view to its exact location. It is easy to see that 'Tiru' is but an honorific prefix, while 'Kaḷam' in general signifies a spot (stāna in Sanskrit). In words like 'Amar Kaḷam', 'Pōr-Kaḷam', etc., we find the adjunct 'Kaḷam' signifying the field or spot where the battle took place. The usage of the word is prominent in Kaḷavaḷi Nārpahu' Quite in conformity with this usage, 'Vaṇjikkaḷam' would naturally mean Taken in this senses 'Kaḷam' merely the place or city called 'Vangi.' becomes an adjunct as in 'Por-Kalam' and the term 'Vaṇji' alone remains as the name of the town, under discussion. It turns out then that 'Tiruvaṇjikkaḷam' of the Ācāryās is just 'Vaṇji' and no other. This conclusion is strengthened by Appiḷḷai, the author of the Vāḷit-tirunāmam, who says definitely that the birth - place of

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5. புனர்பூசத்தெழில் வஞ்சிக்களத்திற்குன்றி - Prabanda Sāram, Verse 8. எண்டிசையுமேத்துங் குலசேகரனா ரெனவுரைப்பர் வாய்த்த திருவஞ்சிகாளம் Upadeśa Rattinamālai, Verse 3.

Kulaśekhara was 'Vāñji'<sup>6</sup>. Considering that Appiḷai was one of the eight chief disciples of Varavara-Muni, one can safely assert that he should have known full well the reference to the place as 'Tiruvañjikkaḷam' in his own Ācāryā's work, the 'Upadēsarattinamālai'. His own rendering of it into 'Vañji' shows clearly that 'Vāñji' was the name of the city as intended by Varavaramuni, or at any rate that they referred to one and the same place.

It has often been suggested that this 'Tiruvañjikkaḷam' is no other than the 'Tiruvañjikkaḷam' of the West Coast. That this suggestion is based merely on verbal similarity will be evident from the following discussion.

Hitherto it has been held that 'Tiruvañjikkaḷam' is the name of the place, one of the many sacred places of Tamil Śaivism.<sup>7</sup> It is situated in the Malaināḍu Division of the Tamil Country, very near the modern city of Cranganore. Nevertheless, it is worthwhile examining the Tēvaram hymns and the Periyapurāṇam as to the nature and location of this sacred place.

6. 'வஞ்சிகரந்தன்னில் வாழுவந்தோன் வாழியே'  
—Nāḷayina Divya Prabandam -2nd Edn. ed.  
Krishnamāchārya p. 144.

7. See the following - 'வஞ்சிக்களம்' என்பதை அஞ்சைக்களம் எனத் தேவராப்பாடல்பெற்ற சிவதலத் துடன் சிலர் இயைபுபடுத்தல்பொருத்த மற்றதென்க.  
"—M. Raghava Ayyangar - Āl, Kālanilai - 2nd Edn. p. 170. 'இவற்றால் கொடுங்கோளுக்கு மிகவணித் தாயுள்ள திருவஞ்சிக்குளத்தில் வாழ்ந்துவந்த சேரமான் பெருமான்' ibid. 166.

The opening stanza of *Sēramān-Perumāḷ-Nāyanār-Purāṇam* clearly points to the fact that 'Tiruvaṅjikkaḷam' is the temple in the city of Koḍungōlūr. After pointing out in the first half of the stanza that it was an ancient city of the Malaināḍu region full of riches and renown the second part runs thus: சேவீற்றிருந்தார் திரு வஞ்சைக்களமுநிலவிச்சேரர் கோவீற்றிருந்து முறை புரியுங் குலக்கோ மூதூர்கொடுங்கோளுர்<sup>8</sup>.

Freely rendered, it would mean that it was the ancient city of Koḍungōlūr where the Cēra king ruled and in which 'Tiruvaṅjikkaḷam' the abode of Śiva stood. Having described Kodungolur in the first few stanzas, Sekkiḷār proceeds to mention the birth of Perumākkōdaiyar in the city. The latter it is said grew up to be such a fervent devotee of Śiva that he neglected the affairs of the state and spent his life in constant service to the God at 'Tiruvaṅjikkaḷam'.

உண்மேவிய வன்பினராகி யுரிமையரசர் தொழில்  
புரியார்  
தெண்ணீர் முடியார் திருவஞ்சைக்களத்திற் றிருத்  
தொண்டே புரிவார்<sup>9</sup>

'Full of love (to God) he would neglect the rights and duties of a sovereign and engage himself solely in sacred acts of devotion at 'Tiruvaṅjikkaḷam' (The abode of Śiva)'. The compound தெண்ணீர்முடியார் திருவஞ்சைக்களம் viz., the 'Tiruvaṅjikkaḷam' of

8. Periyapurāṇam Ed. Ārumuga Nāvalar: P. 458.

9. Peria-Purāṇam Ed. Ārumuga Nāvalar, Sēramān Perumāḷ Nāyanār Purāṇam V. 7 - P. 459.

Tēṇṇir-Muḍiyār' (Śiva) clearly signifies that it is the name of the temple. The suggestion is at once apparent that it is in the Cera capital itself and confirms the statement made in the opening stanza quoted above. The next three stanzas about the King's act of devotion suggest that it was his daily routine in the temple in his capital. There is no mention of his having gone elsewhere away from capital for worship. The story goes that while 'Perumakkōdaiyār' was piously engaged in devotional acts, the ruling king of the land (Poraiyan) renounced the world and repaired to the forest for penance.<sup>10</sup> The ministers after seven days' deliberation went up to the Royal devotee in 'Tiruvaṇṇikkaḷam' and prayed to him to don the crown that was his. The passage in this connection deserves notice.

வந்த மரபின் ரசனிப்பான் வனஞ்சார்

தவத்தின் மருவியபின்

சிந்தை மதி நூனேரமைச்சர்

சிலநாளாய்ந்து தெளிந்த நெறி

முந்தைமரபின் முதல்வர் திருத்தொண்டு

முதல்வார் முதற்றுக விந்துமுடியார்

திருவஞ்சைக் களத்திலவர் பாலெய்தினார்<sup>11</sup>

There is again no indication that 'Tiruvaṇṇikkaḷam' was away from the capital, it being merely stated that in order to settle the succession the ministers went up to him there. Not being in the palace but always in the temple, he had to be approached there. The hesitant

10. Ibid. V. 10.

11. Śēramān-Perumāḷ - Nāyanār Purāṇam. V. 17.  
Purīa-Purāṇam-Ed. Arumuga Nāvalar - P. 460.

prince accedes to their request only after prayerful consultation with the God and he is duly crowned. Immediately after the coronation he worships the God, starts from the temple for the state procession round the city streets. Here again Śekkiṇar's words are significant :

தம்பிரானார் கோயில் வலங்கொண்டு  
 திருமுன்னாழ்ந்தெழுந்து கும்பயானை மேற்கொண்டு  
 கொற்றக்குடையுஞ் சாமரையும் நம்புமுரிமை  
 யவர்தாங்க நலங்கொண்கர் சூழ்வலங்கொள்ள  
 மொய்ம்பிலுவரின் பொதிசுமந்தோர்  
 வண்ணான்முன்னே வரக்கண்டார்<sup>12</sup>

The statement that he mounted the elephant soon after worshipping the deity in the temple confirms the fact of its location within the capital itself.

On another occasion Śeraman is said to have worshipped in the temple before leaving the capital on a pilgrimage to chidambaram.<sup>13</sup> Then we come across several passages wherein we have explicit references to 'Tiruvāṇjikkalam' as the name of the temple in the capital city of the cēras<sup>14</sup>. Above all the evidence contained in verse 32 of the 'Veḷḷanai Charukkam' must put the issue beyond doubt in regard to 'Tiruvāṇjikkalam'. It is explicit when it describe it as "Tiruvāṇjik-

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12. Ibid. V. 47. P. 463.

13. Ibid - 146, 148 and 149.

14. Ibid. Stanzas 146, 148 and 149.

kaḷam in Mahōdai sorrounded by honey-dripping and cool shady grooves".<sup>15</sup>

We have so far seen that the Peria Purānam references clearly establish that 'Tiruvaṇjikkaḷam' is the name of the shrine in the Cēra capital. Ample confirmatory evidence is forthcoming from the Tevaram itself. In his 'Kshētrakkōvai-T-Tiruttāṇḍagam' Appar mentions all the Śaiva shrines and calls this particular shrine 'Koḍungōlūr-Aṇjaikkaḷam'<sup>16</sup>. It is very significant that he has mentioned 'Aṇjaikkaḷam' again in his 'Aḍaivu-Tiruttāṇḍagam' as one of the three places whose names end with the adjunct 'Kaḷam'<sup>17</sup>. It may be noted that 'Koḍungōlūr' is not mentioned separately in both the Tāṇḍagams.

Umāpati-Sivācārya the great Śaiva traditionalist and hagiographer points to 'Aṇjaikkaḷam' as the only shrine in the Malai-Nāḍu Region.<sup>18</sup> In his 'Tiruppathikkōvai' also he mentions 'Tiruvaṇjikkaḷam'.<sup>19</sup> The absence of the mention of 'koḍungōlūr' separately in both the kōvais must enable us to infer that it was no Śaiva shrine at all, while the frequent mention of

15. தேனலம்பு தன்சோலைகூழ் மகோனதயிற்  
திருவஞ்சைக்களம்

Periya-Purānam P. 515.

16. திருக்குளத்தோடஞ்சைக்களம் விள்ளாத  
நெடுங்களம் வேட்களம் Ibid. p. 450. V. 10.

17. Tirunāvukkaraṣu - Swāmiḡaḷ - Tēvāram Ed.  
Śaiva Siddhānta Mahā-Samājam 1930 P. 448 - V. 5.

18. மலைநாட்டிலஞ்சைக்களம் ஒன்றே Tiruppathi-  
kakkōvai -Ibid. p. 21. V. 10.

19. திருவேட்கந்திருவஞ்சைக்களமாடானை-  
Ibid. p. 19.

‘Koṇṇōḷūr - Aṇjaikkaḷam’ as in Appar’s Tēvāram cited above must establish that ‘Tiruvaṇjaikkaḷam’ only was the shrine in it.

Now that ‘Tiruvaṇjaikkaḷam’ has been shown to refer only to a shrine in the west Coast region and not to any city, it would be impossible to maintain that it was the birthplace of kulaśekhara. We saw how Pinbaḷagiya Jiyar unmistakably refers to the birth - place of the Āḷvār as his capital city also. Nor would it be possible to contend that the modern ‘Tiruvaṇjaikkaḷam’ is evidently the city named after the shrine in it., and it could as well be the Āḷvā’s native city. For, we come across no such name in early literature pointing to a city. Besides, the absence of any the least trace of Vaiṣṇava tradition in this modern city argues seriously against the Āḷvār’s association with it in any manner. Appropriately enough and quite true to history also, the place is one that is even today humming with Saiva tradition connected with Śēraṁan Perumāḷ, Sundaramūrti and the Lord Śiva. If it had early been recognised as the place in which the Āḷvār was born, there is no doubt that some vaisnava tradition would have gathered round it traces of which at least could have still remained to point to the story.

It is now clear that ‘Tiruvaṇjikkaḷam’ the birth-place of the Āḷvār has to be sought for elsewhere. We know from the specific reference to it by Appiḷḷai in his ‘Vāḷittirunāṁam’ that it is no other than Vāṇji. Taking this along with the fact that Pinbaḷagiya Jiyar refers to a Kollinagar as his native place and probably also his capital, can we not reasonably conclude that this Vāṇji



is the modern Karūr? For, we find that Vañji is the name in classical usage for Karūr, the old-time traditional Cēra capital in the manner of 'Kūḍal' for Madura (the Pāṇya Capital), 'Urandai' and 'Kōḷi' for 'Uraiyūr' (the Cōḷa inland Capital) and 'Puhār' for 'Kāviri-pūmpattinam' the Cōḷa sea-port capital.

We are thus led on to the much discussed problems of the Karūr - Vañji identity. All the relevant facts for and against this identity having been already set forth <sup>20</sup>, I shall content myself with merely pointing to a few more facts culled from literary and inscriptional sources likely to elucidate the problem further.

In his 'Upadēsarattinamālai' Varavara Muni gives among other things the birth - places of the Āḷvārs and Ramanuja. The first of these and the thirteenth stanza of the work mentioning the Avatara of the Mudal-Āḷvārs, Tirumangai and Tiruppāṇ runs as follows: —

எண்ணருஞ்சீர் பொய்க்கமுன்னோர்  
இவ்வுலகில் தோன்றிய ஓர்  
வண்மைமிகுகச்சி மல்கை மாமயிகை-  
மண்ணியில் நீர்  
தேங்குங் குறையலார்  
சீர்க்கவியன் தோன்றியஓர்  
ஓங்குமுறையார் பாணனார். <sup>21</sup>

It will be seen that the birth-place of Tiruppāṇ Āḷvār is stated to be 'Uraiyūr'. Abhirāmavara, the

20. See R. Raghava Ayyangar- Vañji Mānagar- Dr. S. K. Ayyangār, Sērar- Vañji

21. 'Upadēsarattinamālai' with commentary Ed. Sri Vaiṣṇava Mudrāpaka Sabhā V. 30. P 89.

grand-son of Vara-vara-Muni Scholar and traditionalist himself has given an exact translation of the entire work 'Upadēsarattinamālai' in sanskrit. The Sanskrit rendering of the verse given above retains the Tamil name 'Uṟaiyūr' as such without any modification.<sup>22</sup>

The Sanskrit translation of the very next Tamil verse wherein the birth-places of Toṇḍaraḍippoḍi Ālvār and Kulasēkhara are given is significant<sup>23</sup>. We find that the Tamil 'Tiruvaṇjaikkaḷam' is rendered into the Sanskrit 'Nicuḷanāmapuri', the Tamil word 'Vaṇji' and the Sanskrit word 'Nicuḷam' evidently being synonymous. It is necessary for a proper appreciation of the Sanskrit rendering and its bearing on the problem suggested at the outset that we should go a little more into the nature and method of Sanskritisation of proper names adopted by Abhirāmaṇḍava. Of the 12 or 13 place names given in the four Tamil verses only four have been rendered into Sanskrit, the others retaining their Tamil form in the corresponding Sanskrit slokas. And we find that all the four Sanskrit equivalents are not mere translations but names that were in vague and as such were intelligible to the reader. 'Mayūrapuri' for 'Mayilai' is by way of translation exact enough, but would not have been so rendered if it was likely to be unintelligible. The rendering of 'Villiputtūr' into 'Dhanvipuri' would

22. Ibid. p. 81.

23. The Tamil passage 'எண்டிசையுமேத்துங் குலசேகரனாரென வுரைப்பர் வாய்த்த திருவஞ்சிக் களம்' has been rendered into विख्यात श्रीकुलशेखरजन्यदेशः प्रध्यावर्त्ता निचुलनामपुरीजगन्या 'Upadēsarattinamālai' Ed. Sri Vaiṣṇava Mudrāpaka Sabha P. 62.

have been exact enough—it has been rendered so by the author of ‘Prapannāmṛtam’<sup>24</sup> – but it has not been so rendered by Abhirāmavara because of its unintelligibility. It is clear then that he had given us the Sanskrit equivalents of the place names in the original wherever such a rendering was intelligible while being exact. The Sanskrit rendering ‘Nicuḷanāmapuri’ for ‘Tiruvaṇṇaiikkaḷam’ now becomes significant as pointing out that Kulasekhara’s birth-place was one that was also celebrated as ‘nicuḷāpuri’, at any rate in its Sanskrit usage.

An altogether different problem now arises in view of the fact that the traditional name for Uraiyur is also ‘Nicuḷāpuri’.<sup>25</sup> Abhirāmavara’s translation of ‘Tiruvaṇṇaiikkaḷam’ into ‘Nicuḷanāmapuri’ would make us doubt this tradition. For, in the first stanza where a translation is necessary, Uraiyūr is retained as such and in the very next quite a different place is definitely translated as ‘Nicuḷāpuri’. It is inconceivable that he would have failed to render Uraiyūr itself into Nicuḷāpuri had the name been in common usage as is generally believed, and yet tradition literary and otherwise is persistent in ascribing the name to Uraiyūr itself. It is probably a case of confusion arising out of the indefinite use of place names, an initial error being perpetuated, or as is just possible it is a case of two places having the same name ‘Nicuḷāpuri’. One thing, however, is certain that a ‘Nicuḷāpuri’ was the birth place of Kulasekhara Ālvar.

24. ‘Prapannāmṛtam’ Śrī Venkātēśvara Press, Bombay – P. 289.

25. See ‘Arāyirppadi’ – p. 4:–.

The above conclusion is strengthened by Piḷḷailōkan Jiyar the commentator on Upadēsarattinamālai. In very lucid Maṇipravāḷam he explains the significance of each passage and what is more to our purpose gives details as to the location and other details regarding the places we are now considering. All that has to say about 'Uṟaiyūr' is that it is situated just opposite to the 'Tirumukatturai' of the Kāvēri, and that it is great as the place in which Lakṣmi Herself was born<sup>26</sup>. It may be noted that the commentator mentions the shortened form 'Urandai' also. It is reasonable to expect that he would have mentioned the other name 'Nicuḷāpuri' if it had any such. But he has not done so.

His comment on 'Tiruvaṅjikkalam' clinches the issue positively. He puts it down in so many words that the birth place of Kulaśēkhara is one that has the name 'Nicuḷa'.<sup>27</sup> This is quite in keeping Abhirāmavara's translation and seems to strengthen either of the two hypothesis - i. e., that Uṟaiyūr and Nicuḷāpuri are differing or that the two places had the same name. The point, however, to note again is that a 'Nicuḷāpuri' was the birth place of the Ālvār.

Now the question arises where is this 'Tiruvaṅjikkalam-Nicuḷāpuri'. It is obvious that this place derived its name from the fact that 'Vaṅji' or 'Vaṅjuḷam' and

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26) Upadēsarattinamālai - Ed. Srī Vaiṣṇava Mudrapaka Sabha commentary on Verse 31 - P.62.

27) Ibid. p. 63.

'Niculam' are synonymous.<sup>28</sup> In other words, both the terms refer to a common kind of water-reed or water flower.<sup>29</sup> The names must have been given on account of the abundance of the particular flower or plant in the place. Now Karur the modern taluq city of the Coimbatore District has been celebrated in ancient tradition as well preserved in its Sthalapurāṇam as Vaṇḍulāraṇyam.<sup>30</sup>

It is in fact one of the several names of modern Karūr pointing to the obvious fact that it is the city abounding in the forest of 'Vaṇḍulam'. Hence the description 'NICULAPURI' in the sense of the city of 'Nicula' can only stand as a synonym for this Karūr also called Vaṇḍulāraṇyam'. The traditional birth place of the Ālvar as we know, is 'Tiruvaṇḍikaṇam'. Can we then escape the obvious conclusion that this 'Vaṇḍi' and the modern Karūr are one and the same?

It may now be asked cannot the translation stand for 'Vaṇḍi' of the West Coast. It cannot for the simple reason that 'Vaṇḍi' in Malayalam means a boat and it would be absurd to maintain that 'Vaṇḍi' the boat and 'Niculam' the water-reed and flower are synonyms. Thus from the manner in which 'Vaṇḍi' has been described as 'NICULANAMAPURI' we may conclude that this 'Vaṇḍi' the birth place of Kulaśekhara must be no other than karūr.

28. See the Tamil Lexicon for the terms, Vaṇḍi and Vaṇḍulam.

29. Refer Āpte Sanskrit English Dictionary.

30. R. Raghavayyengar - Vaṇḍimānagar

The fact that the Commentator has located the place in Kēraḷadēṣa need not trouble us much. That 'Karūr-Vaṇṇji' was on the borderland between the Cōḷa and the Cēra countries, that it was what was generally called 'Sērar-Koṅgu' all this and much more to the point have been thoroughly discussed by eminent Tamil scholars. Karūr was the inland capital of the Cēras for a long time in history.<sup>31</sup>

One finds ample confirmation of this position from the works of the Āḷvār himself. Of the five places he has sung about namely, Śrīraṅgam, Vēṅgadam, Chitrakūṭam, Kaṇṇapuram and Vittuvakkōḍu, we find that the last named is the only one included in the list of the Malaināḍu shrines.<sup>32</sup> It is sometimes seriously doubted whether even this could be one such, for if so one should in all probability expect Nammāḷvār to have sung about it, and particularly so as he has sung about all the traditionally accepted West Coast shrines. That he has not mentioned this Vittuvakkōḍu shows that it was perhaps not in the Malainadu region at all. Kulaśēkhara himself cannot be expected to have sung about only one West Coast shrine 'Vittuvakkōḍu' to the exclusion of all the others. It is surmised that the portion round the Viṣṇu shrine on the banks of the river 'Ānporunai' in Karūr

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31. For a very valuable discussion on this question see R. Rāghava Ayyaṅgār - Vaṇṇiṁanagar.

32. For a list of the Malaināḍu shrines see Nuṛeṭṭu-Tirupati Prabhāvam-Nālayiram-Ed. S. Krishnamāchārya p. 42

which is even today called by the name 'Vittuvakkōṭṭa-grahāram' might well be the Vittuvakkōḍu of the Āḷvār's works.<sup>33</sup> It may be pointed out here in support of this surmise that this location of Vittuvakkōḍu in Karur itself conforms most perfectly to that given in Piḷḷailōkan Jīyar's commentary above referred to. The Jīyar says that Vittuvakkōḍu and Vañjikkaḷam are very near each other. Strikingly enough one finds that the modern Tiruvañjikkūḷam and Vittuvakkōḍu of the West Coast are so far apart that they cannot by any means be said to conform to the commentator's exact description of the two places. It turns out that this is an additional argument in favour of Karūr-Vañji being the birth place of the Āḷvār and not the Vañji of the West Coast, or the modern Tiruvañjikkūḷam.

Apart from the fact that of the remaining four shrines, about which the Āḷvār has sung, all but Vēṅgaḍam are in the Cōḷa Country. There is tradition to the effect that he, after persistent longings to visit Śrīraṅgam spent most of his life in that place as a devotee and that he ended his last days in Mannanār-Kōil in the modern Ambāsamudram Taluk of the Tinnelvely District. All this points to the probability of the Āḷvār having lived and moved in the land of Kāvēri.

Above all there is unmistakable inscriptional evidence to establish that Karūr-Vañji or the inland vañji was the capital of the Cēras. In the Tamil text of the larger Sinnamanūr plates we find that Vañji is definitely located on the banks of the Kāvēri.

33. M. Raghava Ayyangar - Āḷvargaḷ Kālanilai -Pp. 167 - 168.

*The Date of Kulaśekhara:-*

We now turn to the problem of the date of Kulaśekhara. It is but a meagre account of this royal devotee that we are able to get from pure tradition. Pinbaḷagiya Jiyar's account mentions his birth in Kollinagar as we have already seen, his early education, his devotion to Viṣṇu, particularly to Rāma and the Rāmāyaṇa Kālakshēpam episode illustrating it, the incident of the jewel showing his love for the Bhāgavatās, his persistent longing to visit Srirāṅgam which led him to renounce the throne and go there<sup>34</sup>. The D. S. Caritam, while covering nearly the same ground omits the Kālakshēpam story and adds that of the marriage of his daughter to Śrī Rāṅganātha. The Prapannāmṛtam and following it the later works would give the additional information that Kulaśekhara's father was one Dṛḍhavrata and that the Āḷvār ended his last days in Brahma-dēśam in the Pāṇḍya country. We find that the traditional accounts do not help us in any way in fixing the Āḷvār's date.

Turning to inscriptions there is the well-known record of the 18th year of Kulōttunga-1 (A.D. 1088) fixing the lower limit for the age of Kulaśekhara<sup>35</sup>. The

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34. For a detailed account of Kulaśekhara's life see Ār. Guru-paramparā Ed S. Krishnamāchārya -p.22 to 25.

35. S.I.I. Vol. 3, 70 -Pp. 148-152. K.G. Śeṣha Iyer refers to another inscription of 1050 A. C. belonging to the reign of Cōḷa-Kēraḷa Dēva also providing for a recital from the Āḷvār's Lyrics as the one of 1088 A.D. The inscription of 1050 A.C. would then fix the lower limit. (I. H. Q. Vol. 7 p. 648)



mural inscriptions in the Kulasekhara Ālvār Kōil the earliest of which is dated in the 4th year of Rājendra Cōḷa, cir 1015 A.D., must certainly point out that the Ālvār had long ago been recognised as a saint, long prior to the beginnings of the 11th century.<sup>36</sup> These inscriptions serve only to fix the lower limit which, however, is not much in view of the fact that the date of Maṇakkāl-Nambi, the author of the Taniyan verse on Kulasekhara's works would push it back to an earlier period still. Maṇakkāl-Nambi may be assigned to the latter half of the 9th century and the first half of the next.<sup>37</sup>

Further estimates have been made on the basis of the Ālvār's own works. The casual use of the word 'Tondaraḍippodī' in a certain verse of the 'Perumal-Tirumoḷi' has been made to suggest the possible priority of the Ālvār of that name to Kulasekhara.<sup>38</sup> The suggestion seems to be a little far-fetched. For, the meaning of the particular stanza in which the word occurs is just this:—

"Even the pleasure of a plunge in the Ganges will be nothing to me when I get immersed in the dust of the devotees of Śrī Rāṅganātha singing his praise and

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36. K. G. Śeṣha Iyer - Art. on Kulasekhara - I. H. Q. Vol. 7. - p. 648.

37. Art. on 'Kambaramāyanam Arangeṇṇiya Kālam', Harisamaya Divākaram Vol. 7 Part 1 1930 - See also K. G. Sesha Iyer - I. H. Q. ibid.

38. Ālvargaḷ Kālanilai - p. 159 Also Swami Vēdā-chalam, Mānicksa-Vacakar Kāla Āraṇyachchi

dancing in ecstasy". The word 'Tondaradippodiyāḍa' particularly in its contrast to 'Gangainir-Kuḍaindāḍum' in the verse makes it refer to the devotees in a general way. We cannot by any means construe it as a proper name referring to 'Tondaradippodi Alvar'. On similar lines of reasoning, we may have to infer the priority of Sundaramūrti to Appar from the latter's words: 'சுந்தரனைத் துணைக்கவரி விசக்கொண்டார்' in the Tēvāram.<sup>39</sup> Even if the above suggestion is accepted we can only say that Kulasekhara must be later than Tondaradippodi. This, however, is no use because the latter's date has itself to be determined yet.

The attempt to see a reference to Dantivarman Pallava in a passage of the Perumāḷ Tirumoḷi verse and to arrive at Kulaśēkharā's date on this basis has been shown to have failed completely and it is unnecessary to repeat the arguments here.<sup>40</sup> The conclusions sought to be derived from the autobiographical references, however, have to be examined. Among several such the particular one in which he claims to be கெல்லிகாவலன், கூடல்நாயகன், கோழிக்கோன், குலசேகரன்<sup>41</sup> deserves to be noticed. From the fact of actual rule or overlordship over all the three traditional Tamil kingdoms implied in the above passage it is argued that Kulaśēkhara

39. Tirunāvukkaraṣu Swāmigaḷ - Tēvāram Ed. Saiva Siddhānta Samājam Tanittiruttāṇḍavam - V.5 p. 495.

40. See T. A. Gōpinatha Rao - History of Śrī Vaiṣṇavas p. 22 Contra Āḷvargaḷ Kālanilai pp. 174 to 176.

41. Perumāḷ Tirumoḷi -2, v. 10 -

must be assigned to a period when such a Cēra ascendency was possible in the history of S. India. From this point of view it is stated that Kulaśekhara must belong to the period anterior to the beginnings of Cōḷa ascendency in Cir. 900 A.D. It is further pointed out how just then the Cōḷa capital under Parāntaka came to be Tanjore and not Uṟaiyūr as before.

Dr. S. K. Ayyaṅgar is still more specific in stating that such an ascendency as is implied in the Āḷvar's words, prior to the transfer of the Cōḷa capital from Uṟaiyur to Tanjore (Cir. 900 A.D.) would have been possible either before the rise of the great Pallavas under the dynasty of Narasimha Varman some time before 600 A.D. or after the collapse of this dynasty following the death of the great Pallava Nandivarman Cir. 800 A.D. The period anterior to the rise of the great Pallavas some time in the 6th Century A.D. may be appropriate in his opinion, if Tirumaṅgai is to be the last of the Āḷvars according to tradition.<sup>42</sup>

Arguing on very similar lines K. G. Sēsha Iyer would conclude that Kulaśekhara may have established his supremacy in the Tamil country somewhere immediately before the 7th Century A. D. when according to him the position of the Cōḷas and the Pāṇḍyās seems to have been precarious.<sup>43</sup> He would then point out that the upper limit of the date of Kulaśekhara is supplied by the Tirukkuraḷ quotation in Perumaḷ Tirumoḷi v. 3, and that his prosody would show

42. 'Early His of Vaiṣṇavism in S. India' pp. 36,37.

43. I. H. Q. Vol . 7. Pp. 653, 654.

that he came some centuries after the Sangam period. Having thus broadly fixed the upper and lower limits, he would base his final conclusion on the evidence of the Guruparamparās and say that the Alvar was born on the 29th January, 527 and died in 594 after living for 67 years. It is thus found that the only basis for the determination of the age of Kulaśekhara is the passage above referred to taken in its strictly literal interpretation. It is, however, not quite safe to have it so. In the first place the context in which the passages occur must be noted. All these without exception occur in the last verse of every ten verses in the Perumal Tirumoli. Though not the rule, it is the common practice among poets and authors to refer to themselves, rather eulogistically too, in these Mudrākavis as they are called. We find that it is very common in the Tevaram and the Nālayiram generally. Very often they contain praises and laudations of the author. Having been recognised as a convention, it was not considered quite bad form to speak about oneself even exaggeratingly in these Mudrākavis. Often the references in these verses like those in conventional panegyrics (Prašastīs) in inscriptions cannot be taken literally. It was not unusual either for the Tamil kinds to claim conquest and overlordship over their neighbouring kingdoms without such actual accomplishments. The practice of ascribing to oneself the titles and achievements of one's ancestors and of even the feudatories claiming the titles of their overlords are not uncommon in the history of our land as seen from literature and inscriptions. These passages

then cannot be safely relied on to fix the age of Kulaśekhara.<sup>44</sup>

There is yet another point of view with regard to this problem which may be noted. Paṇḍit Rāghava Ayyaṅgar makes at the very outset a clear distinction between the early Ceras who ruled with both Karūr-Vaṅgi and Koḍungōlūr as capitals (the one being the inland capital and the other the port) and the later Ceras who ruled the West coast region with only Koḍungōlūr as their capital. He then points out that the later stage might have come about the 7th Century A.D. On the basis of the Ālvar's own words he would assign him to the early period of Cēra history. It would thus appear that he does not interpret the Ālvar's references to himself above discussed literally so as to imply conquest over the Pāṇḍya and Cōḷa countries. He would take them to refer to a possible blood relationship between the Pāṇḍya, Cēra and Cōḷa monarchs. This possibility again is made to rest either on the 'Marumakkattāyam' system or on the occasional practice of choosing the scions of Pāṇḍya and Cōḷa family for the Cēra throne.<sup>45</sup> All these are at best speculative possibilities based upon a strained interpretation of the passages in the Perumāḷ Tirumōḷi. Even granting the possibility one wonders if this would be consistent with the fact of Kulaśekhara's supremacy in the early period of Cēra history which the

44. See K. S. Śrīnivāsa Piḷḷai 'Tamiḷar Varalāru'. But curiously enough he would still see the implication of the Chera conquest of Uṟaiyur from 'Kolikkōn' in the passage.

45. 'Ālvargaḷ Kālanilai' 2nd Edn. Pp. 170-172.

author propounds earlier in his thesis. One cannot suppose that such words are spoken by a Pāṇḍya or Cōḷa prince even from the Cēra throne.

The instance the author gives of 'Kōkkandān-Ravi' who bore the title 'Chandrāditta-kula Tilaka' illustrating such relationships is rather misleading. As the author indicates the title may certainly be taken to show the Pāṇḍya-Cōḷa connection and it may be certain also that he was the chosen Cēra ruler. Still there being no indication of Cēra ancestry at all the in the title, we must infer that he had none such. And we won't be justified in taking the Āḷvār to have been such a ruler.

We came upon the most interesting point of the author's account of Kulaśēkhara when he proclaims the identity of the Āḷvār with the predecessor of Cērmān Perumāḷ <sup>46</sup>. He seems to rely on the D.S. Caritam story about Kulaśēkhara's renunciation on the one hand and the Periya-Purāṇam account of the latter's similar act on the other. He would ignore the minor differences in the two stories and rely on the similarity of major incidents in them to establish their identity. In view of the fact that such renunciation stories of kings are very common in our country the proposed identity must be deemed baseless. Besides, this identity would seem to contradict the author's own assertion that Kulaśēkhara must have belonged to the dynasty of the Cēras who ruled from Karūr-Vaṇṇi as their capital. If Kulaśēkhara was Śēramān's predecessor, how could he be also an early Cēra of the Karūr capital? For was not Śēramān,

46. Ibid Pp. 161 and 162.

according to the Periya-Purāṇam account, and his predecessor ruling in Koḍungōlūr? This apparent difficulty is sought to be overcome by the rather ingenious suggestion that while the father ruled from Karūr the son and their Seramān ruled in Koḍungōlūr even in his father's life time.

It would also appear that the sole reliance is placed on D. S. Caritam for another conclusion of the author, i.e., the contemporaneity of the Ālvār with Tirumaṅgai-Mannan and Tonḍaraḍippoḍi. We have elsewhere shown how not only these but almost all the Ālvārs are brought together in an entirely romantic setting in the Kāvya; and if we can gather history from it, we can as well establish the contemporaneity of all the Ālvārs and save ourselves the bother of an elaborate discussion as to their chronology. Indeed he is so definite in this chronological conclusion that he interprets one of the traditional names of three kings occurring in a passage of Perumāḷ Tirumoḷi to refer certainly to Kulaśekhara. Too many gratuitous assumptions which beg the question nullify the suggested blood relationship of the Ālvār with the Pāṇḍyās and the Cōḷās and the sole reliance of D. S. Caritam renders the proposed identity of the Ālvār with Sērmān's predecessor untenable.

## CHAPTER VII

### PERIYĀLVĀR. AND ŚRĪ ANDĀL

Periyālvār the brahmin saint of Śrīvilliputtūr calls himself Viṣṇucitta and Pattarpirān in his works, and Bhaṭṭanātha is apparently the translation of the latter Tamil name given to him also in the Tanian or the Commendatory works referring to him. It would appear that he got the name 'Periyālvār by reason of the highly devotional attitude of his to the Lord, quite different from and superior to all the other forms of devotion revealed in the whole range of the Divya-prabandham<sup>1</sup>. His works the 'Tiruppallāṇḍu' and 'Periyālvār-Tirumōḷi' comprise very nearly the first five hundred verses of the Nālayiram collection and are justly praised for their lyrical beauty and exalting sentiment. In the larger of the two works he reveals in the narration of Kṛṣṇāvatāra episodes. The 'Tiruppallāṇḍu' itself has been given a very high place among the works of the Ālvār in that the attitude of Bhakti revealed therein—that of the bhakta blessing the Lord—is said to typify a highly exalted form of devotion in which the bhakta effaces himself and delights only in the well being of the Lord in the full belief that all is well with the world when He is well.<sup>2</sup> This form of bhakti has been conventionally

• 1. See verse 18 = Upadēsarattinamālai and the commentary of Piḷḷai Lōkan Jīyar thereon.

2. See Vs. 19 & 20 of U. R. Mālai and the Jīyar's commentary for the greatness of Tirupplāṇḍu.



called 'Paḷḷāṇḍu-Niṣṭai' by the Sri Vaiṣṇava Doctrinaires of S. India after the Āḷvār's work in which it stands revealed.

Traditional works like the Ārāyirappaḍi and D. S. Caritam and closely following them the later Ācāryās like Vēḍānta Deśika and Varavara Munī would place Bhaṭṭa-nātha after Kulaśēkhara in the chronological order. The Ārāyirappaḍi says that he was born in the asterism Swāti in the month of Āni and this is repeated in all the later works some of which as usual give the Kali year also of his date of birth <sup>3</sup>

The most important facts to remember about the Āḷvār's life as given in tradition are his devotion to the God at Srīvilliputtūr, the story of the context in the Pāṇḍyā Court, and the marriage of his daughter Āṇḍāl to Sri Raṅganātha.<sup>4</sup> The 2nd of these, viz., the story of the contest corresponds in its main features so closely with that of Gṇanasambandha as almost to suggest that they might have been inspired imitations of each other. The suggestion seems to gather strength in view of the fact that the hagiographers in each case were later-day persons and it is the Ārāyirappaḍi alone long after the Periya-Purāṇam that gives an account of Periyāḷvār's context.<sup>5</sup> It is very likely that the Tamil tianian

3. The Mūvāyirappaḍi of Brmhātānta Jīyar, Prapannāmṛtam etc.

4. For an elaborate description of the wedding see D. S. Caritam

5. It is not however suggested that no contest could have taken place in the Pāṇḍyā court at Madura. But the point to note here is the close similarity between the two episodes.

of Pāṇḍya Bhaṭṭar on the Āḷvār referring to the contest was itself based on this account of Pinbaḷagiya Jiyar. There being no direct conference to the contest in the works of the Āḷvār himself, it would be safe not to base our chronological conclusions at any rate on that basis entirely.<sup>6</sup>

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6. Pandit M. Raghava Ayyangar assigns the Āḷvār to the 8th Century on the assumption that the contest in the Pāṇḍya Court should have been only between the two Vaidika religions, Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism and not with the heretical cults of Buddhism and Jainism as in the 7th Century. (Āḷvārgaḷ Kālanilai- 2nd Edn. Pp. 51, 52). For contrary opinion regarding religious strife in these centuries see K. G. Sankara J. O. R. 1927. To me it appears that there is no method of ascertaining so definitely the nature of religious strife in these centuries. The Paṇḍit would further rely on the incident of the contest to suggest that the Alvar became the Guru of the Pāṇḍya king after the victory and to interpret the passage in the larger Sinnamanur plates 'Guru'.

Referring to Jaṭila Parāntaka in that light as specifically implying their contemporaneity. 'Āḷvārkaḷ Kālanilai' Pp 58, 59) For different interpretations of the passage see K. A. N. Sastri for Pāṇḍyan Kingdom, also K. G. Sankara J. O. R. 1927. Also Venkayya Edn. of the Madras Museum plates - Ind. Ant. Vol. 22.

The date of Periyālvār is mixed up with the much discussed problem of Pāṇḍya chronology.<sup>7</sup> For, in the absence of any manner of evidence literary or inscrip-tional, we have to rely solely on two or three references to a Pāṇḍya contemporary and another person of importance in the Pāṇḍya Court from the Ālvār's works and the Ārayirappaḍi. The references may be examined one by one.

The Ālvār refers to a certain Vaiṣṇava Devotee of the name of 'Selvan'. Both from the manner of his reference and from that of P. Jiyar it appears that he had the surname 'Abhimānatuṅga'<sup>8</sup>

This led some scholars to equate 'Abhimānatuṅga' with 'Abhimānamēru' and identify the Ālvār's con-temporary with Rājasimha III (No. Venkayya's Genealogy) who bore the latter title on the supposition that 'Selvan' of Rājasimha's court should have borne his master's biruda as a mark of royal favour.<sup>9</sup> In the absence of any strong evidence to support the proposed identity of the two titles we have to consider the contemporaneity of the Ālvār with Rājasimha III as highly doubtful. Besides Rājasimha's date would be a very late date for the Alvar as coming well within the times of Ācārya Nāthamuni.

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7. Refer Pāṇḍyan Kingdom by K. A. N. Sastri for Pāṇḍya Chronology.

8. Ārayirappaḍi Ed. Sri Vaiṣṇava Mudrāpaka Sabhā P. 77.

9. M. S. Aiyangar Tamil studies.

Of the two references to a Pāṇḍya monarch one is in such general terms to the ancestral title of the Pāṇḍyas that is not possible to fix any one king as the Ālvar's contemporary on that basis<sup>10</sup> In a sense the other reference to a 'Nedūmāran' in the oft quoted verse of the Perumāḷ-Tirumōḷi may also be said to be as vague<sup>11</sup> For 'Nedū' means 'great' and 'māran' signifies a Pāṇḍya monarch generally. One fact, however, is definite in the passage that the Pāṇḍya contemporary of Periyālvār was a devotee of Viṣṇu in that he is stated to have been worshipping the deity at Tirumālirunṅōlai<sup>12</sup> Considering

10. This reference occurring in V, IV, VII Perumāḷ-Tirumōḷi mentions the exploit of fixing the fish emblem on the Himalayās. Whoever was the first to achieve the distinction it would appear from inscriptions that it became a legendary exploit ascribed to the Pāṇḍyas in general. This would be clear from the Sanskrit portion of the larger Sinnamanūr Plates (Verses 2 and 3) mentioning this particular exploit which has been translated by the epigraphist thus: "... Of the kings born in this (family) who had destroyed all enemy kings and had their edicts established on the snowy mountain the priest was the venerable Agastya' - S. I. I. Vol. 3-p. 457. See also the following in the introduction on p. 442. - 'From him were descended the kings known as Pāṇḍyās' - V. 2, 'Who engraved their edicts on the Himalayan Mountains and whose family priest was Agastya V. 3. It may be noted that no particular Pāṇḍya is credited with the exploit.

11. P. Tirumōḷi - IV, 2, 7.

12. Ibid 'Tennan Koṇḍāḍum - Tirumālirunṅōlai'.

that the Pāṇḍyas from Kaṇḍungōn downwords to Rājasimha III, as gleaned from available inscriptions were traditionally of the Śaiva persuasion, it seems worthwhile ascertaining if there is any reference at all in the records to a Vaiṣṇava monarch in the line. They only specific reference of that kind is to Jaṭila Parāntaka son of Māravarman Rājasimha, whom the records acclaim as a 'Parama Vaiṣṇava'<sup>13</sup> The manner of reference betokens the faith of the monarch in unequivocal terms and possibly also indicates the noteworthy deviation on his part from the traditional professions of his line. From the facts that the Vēlvikkuḍi grant issued in the third year of his reign begins with an invocation to Śiva, it is surmised that he should have become a Vaiṣṇava only latterly as indicated by the Ānamalai stone inscriptions (A. D. 770) and that therefore Periyālvār, his guru must have lived prior to 770 A. D.<sup>14</sup> But one should not proceed to ascertain the religion of a monarch from formal invocations in grants of this kind. There being a specific reference, however, to the fact of Jaṭila Parāntaka's pronounced Vaiṣṇava faith, it seems very probable that he was the Ālvār's contemporary.

We have next to examine the reference in the Āraṇyirappaḍi to the Pāṇḍya Contemporary of Periyālvār. The Jīyar calls him Śrī Vallabha'. It is not quite possible to ascertain whether this 'Śrī Vallabha' was the name or merely the title of the king. Whatever it was, three kings in the Pāṇḍya geneology are seen to have

13. The Madras Museum Plates -Ind. Ant. Vol. 22.

14. K. Srinivasa Piḷḷai - 'Tamiḷar Varalāru'.

possessed it viz., Rājasimha III, Śrī Vallabha and Jaṭila Parāntaka himself. The dates of the first two being too late for the Āḷvār we have again to conclude that Parāntaka must have been his contemporary.

Thus we find that both the Perumaḷ Tirumoḷi and the Ārayirappaḍi references point to Jaṭila Parāntaka or Parāntaka Neḍunjaḍaiyan (Cir. A. D. 765 to 815) 1, as the probable contemporary of the Āḷvār. In spite of this coincidence, however, one should prefer on strict canons of historical criticism to rely on the internal evidence contained in the Āḷvār's works. Any attempt to connect the two must lead to difficulties as will be seen presently. The author of Āḷvargaḷ Kālanilai begins his discussion on the age of Periyaḷvār by declaring that 'Neḍumāran' in the passage must be a proper name. But as the Pāṇḍya records point to a Jaṭila or 'Saḍaiyan' only as a Vaiṣṇava, he is driven to the necessity of suggesting that Neḍumāran, the father of Parāntaka could have also been the Āḷvār's contemporary; and he bases this conclusion on the facts contained in the Vēlvikuḍi and other records about the Uttara Mantri Mārānkāri. The latter's long period of service in the father Māravarman's Court, his Vaiṣṇavite leanings (as is evidenced in the Anamalai record) the power he wielded in court, and such other facts are made to suggest the possible conversion of Neḍumāran under his influence.<sup>15</sup> This can at best be a surmise and cannot be conclusive evidence for the contemporaneity of Neḍumāran also with the Āḷvār.

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15. Āḷvargaḷ-Kālanilai 2nd Edn. Pp. 56-58.

Further on he tries to equate this Neḍumāraṇ with Śrī Vallabha of the Āṛāyirappaḍi. In so doing he is again forced to suggest that he could be inferred to have possessed the title or the name 'Śrī Vallabha' from the fact of his grandson Śrī Māra Śrī Vallabha having possessed it. It may be pointed out that there is no limit to this kind of inference as we can infer this title<sup>16</sup>, by descent to all Māravarmanas from Avanicūlāmaṇi downwards.

It is thus found that the date of Periyālvār has to be determined only on the basis of his reference to a Pāṇḍya contemporary and on the evidence of the Madras Museum Plates pointing to Jaṭila Parāntaka Cir. 765 to 815<sup>17</sup> as the only Vaiṣṇava monarch who could have been one such. It is possible to arrive at the conclusion that the Ālvār was in all probability the contemporary of Jaṭila Parāntaka and that therefore he may be assigned to the latter half of the 8th Century and the first quarter of the Ninth.

### SRI-ĀNDĀL

Having thus assigned Periyālvār to the latter half of the 8th Century A.D. let us turn our attention to the date of Śrī Āṇḍāl traditionally acknowledged to be

16. From the text of the larger Sinnamanūr Plates atleast, it appears that 'Śrī Vallabha' is a title -See V. 10 Sanskrit portion S. I. I. Vol. 3, Part 4, P. 451. See also the introduction 'Śrīmāra entitled Śrī Vallabha' Ibid P. 443, and the following translation on page 457.

17. Pāṇḍyan kingdom, Professor, K. A. N. Sastri P. 46.

his foster daughter. On the basis of this tradition any independent chronological discussion as to the age of this devotee might seem unnecessary, it being easy to assign her also to the same age as that of Periyālvār. Nevertheless we cannot fail to notice the attempts of some scholars to fix the date of Śrī Āṇḍāl more precisely on the basis of a text in the Tiruppāvai.<sup>18</sup> Their conclusions, based as they would be on internal evidence deserve to be examined.

The text under reference occurring in the thirteenth stanza of Tiruppāvai runs as follows:— “Veḷḷiyēḷundu-Viyaḷan Urangiṟu”. Taken along with the opening lines of the first stanza ‘Mārgaḷi-Tingaḷ’ etc., these lines are said to indicate a particular connection of stars on the full moon day of Mārgaḷi on which Āṇḍāl must have begun her Mārgaḷi Nōmbu. On this astronomical basis scholars have arrived at various dates for the composition of Tiruppāvai.<sup>19</sup>

The nature of the Tiruppāvai composition of Śrī Āṇḍāl must be well borne in mind for a proper interpretation of the text in question. It belongs to a

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18. See M. R. Ayyangar - Ālvāragaḷ - Kālanilai - 2nd Edn. Pp. 75-84. Also his earlier contributions in J. O. R. 1927. Also K. G. Sankara Article on the Date of Tiruppāvai J. O. R. 1927 and M. R.'s rejoinder thereto in the same Number.

19. According to M. R. Ayyangar the exact date is the full moon day of Mārgaḷi 731 A.D. while it is 23rd November, 850 A.D. according to K. G. Sankara, See the references under F. N. 2 on the previous page.



conventional form of Tamil poetry called 'Pāvaippāṭṭu'<sup>20</sup> relating to the age long observances of young girls of marriageable age and their ceremonial early morning ablutions called 'Pāvai Nōmbu' and 'Mārgaḷi-Nīraḍal' respectively.<sup>21</sup>

The author of this form of poetry male or female gives expression to his or her thoughts in the form of an address to his or her lady companion. In other words while the 'pāvai-Nōmbu' and the 'Mārgaḷi Nīraḍal' are ancient customs still in vogue in our country<sup>22</sup>. The pāvaippāṭṭu relating to them was sung by the author in an imaginary setting of these customary festivals. This is shown by the fact that even males could be authors of such compositions. Thus Māṇikkavācakar has a 'Tiruvembāvai' to his credit as sweet as the composition of .Śrī Āṇḍāl.<sup>23</sup> It is not as if the saint actually performed

20 Pandit Raghava Ayyangar has pointed out that Pāvaippāṭṭu was a form of poetry in ancient Tamil classics. See his article on 'Thainīraḍal' H. S. Divākaram Dec. and Jan. 1927 & 28 Page 273.

21. For a lucid exposition of these customs refer to the entire article in note 3.

22. The nature of Pāvai-Nōmbu and Mārgaḷi Nīraḍal as seen from the Sangam classics, the spiritual setting given to these by Āṇḍāl, Māṇikkavācakar and others, in their works, the varying phases of these observances through centuries and the still common vogue in Malabar are all explained by the learned Paṇḍit. Art. Thai-Nīraḍal. Pp. 281-283.

23. The similarity between the two poems is shown in the article noted above.

either the 'Nōmbu' or the Nīraḍal'. He must be said to have placed himself in the position of one performing them and composed these verses in that imaginary setting. Even in the case of Āṇḍāl where the performances could be deemed real and not imaginary as she was a female, her Tiruppāvai need not be taken literally to have been sung at the time of the actual observances. For that matter it is unlikely indeed that Āṇḍāl the daughter of the Brahmin saint Bhaṭṭanātha actually performed the 'Nōmbu'.<sup>24</sup> However, it is very unlikely that the Tiruppāvai was sung just in the course of ceremonial observances. We have to take it that she composed her Tiruppāvai in as conventional a style and in as imaginary a setting as any other author would have done. In other words we need not expect Āṇḍāl to have taken a part in every episode mentioned in the Tiruppāvai or interpret every passage literally. Thus the address to 'the young lasses of Āyappāḍi'.<sup>25</sup> In the opening stanza itself should not be literally taken to be so. It is well known that Āṇḍāl lived in Srīvilliputtūr and Āyappāḍi and the lasses therein could have come in for her impassioned address only in her imagination. It is very clear that the background of the whole poem is the

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24. It is interesting to note the opinion of the Commentator Peria Āchan-Piḷḷai on this question. Answering the question whether the Brahmin devotee would have performed the Nonbu as did the Gopis, he says that she simply transported herself into that atmosphere in the land of Kṛṣṇa and the Gōpīs. See commentary on Tiruppāvai (introduction).

25. Tamil for Gōkulam.

romantic episode of Kṛiṣṇa and the Gōpīs in Āyappāḍi, Āṇḍāl imagining herself as one of the Gōpīs<sup>26</sup>

Looked at in this light it seems very difficult to interpret this passage 'Veḷḷieḷundu' etc. as referring to a particular astronomical phase which Śrī Āṇḍāl actually observed while composing the poem. In other words, the implication of any astronomical data in the lines seems far fetched. The setting of the passage is just this; Āṇḍāl as one of the Gōpīs addressing her companions awakens one of them from her slothful slumber for the early morning bath. In so doing, she tells her that the other girls had already reached the river side and that Venus had risen and Jupiter had gone to rest. The rising of Venus 'Sukrōdayam' as it is called is a familiar phenomenon denoting the break of dawn and deemed auspicious for the commencement of the day's work. Intent on calling together her companions for the early morning function, it is just natural that she gave expression to this familiar way of announcing the break of dawn in the words 'Veḷḷieḷundu' Viyālanuṅgiṟṟu'. The latter part 'Viyālanuṅgiṟṟu' need not be taken literally to mean the setting of Jupiter. It is just a poetical play of the words 'Veḷḷi' and 'Viyālan', affording an alternative quibble, and there seems to be no warrant for inferring any definite astronomical data from it. As such it would be futile to build any theories as to the data of the composition of Tiruppāvai and of Śrī Āṇḍāl on this text. In the absence of any other evidence for fixing her age independently it would be safe to rely on tradition and assign here to the age of Periyālvār her foster-father viz., the latter half of the eighth century A. D.

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26. Periya-Āchān Piḷḷai makes this position very clear in the introduction.

## CHAPTER VIII

### TONḌARAḌIPPOḌI AND TIRUPPĀN ĀLVĀR

In accordance with the order referred to so far, we have now to consider the date of Tonḍaraḍippodi and Tiruppān-Ālvār, called Bhaktānghrīrēṇu and Yōgīvaḥa respectively in Sanskrit. It is a comparatively meagre account of these saints that we get in the Arayirappaḍi.

Bhaktānghrīrēṇu was like Bhaṭṭanātha a Brahmin by birth. After his early years of education he entered as a Gṛhastha into a life of devotion to Śrī Raṅganātha. The sudden, almost dramatic change in his life brought about by Dēva-Dēvi a woman of easy virtue, the unbounded grace of God which reclaimed the lost soul and the later years of unceasing piety and fervent devotion are all that we get in the Ārayirappaḍi. With perhaps a poetic elaboration of the romantic episode in the Ālvār's life we get much the same facts in D. S. Caritam. The only other detail in the Ārayirappaḍi worth noting is the fact of Tirumaṅgai having met Tonḍaraḍippodi in the course of his building the Prākāra of the Śrī Raṅgam Temple.

Some more data, however, are sought to be derived from the traditional accounts which mention a Cōla ruler of Uṛaiyūr at the time. It is asserted that his name Dharmavarama Cōḷa, is not being found either in the list of this Great Cōlas beginning from Āditya or among

the Sangam Celebrities like Karikāla and Kōccan-gaṇān, must point to a ruler some where between 600 and 880 A. D. and as even during this period of Pallava Dominion in the South till about 840 A. D., the Cōlas would have only been petty subordinate chieftains under Pallava suzeraniety it is argued that the 'Cōla Bhūpati' mentioned in the Ārāyirappaḍi as the contemporary of the Ālvār must be assigned to the period Cir. 840 to 880 A. D. during which time alone the Cōlas should have regained their power.<sup>1</sup>

The above conclusion must be deemed baseless. For in the first place, neither the Ārāyirappaḍi nor the D. S. Caritam give the name of the Cōla contemporary of the Ālvār, nor do they give us any other helpful detail regarding them. All that we have is a reference to a certain Cōla King of Uṇṇaiyūr. In the absence of any definite information as to whether he was a petty chieftain or an over lord, it is impossible to fix the period of his rule and assign the Ālvār to that period.

It has been shown from inscriptions (Annual Report Ep. Madras - No. 207 of 1907) that the title 'Tonḍaradippoḍi' had come into use as a proper name in 943 A.D. and that therefore, we must infer a date not later than the 9th century for the Ālvār<sup>2</sup>. This, however, cannot carry us very far in determining the Ālvār's date. Nor can the citation of two identical passages from the 'Tirumālai' and the 'Tirukkurundāṇḍagam' suggest the contemporaneity of the Ālvār with

1. K. G. Sankara - J.O.R. Madras - 1927

2. Ibid.

Tirumaṅgai.<sup>3</sup> The only evidence is therefore the Guru-parampara account regarding contemporaneity of the two.

### TIRUPPĀṆ-ĀLVĀR

The Ārāyirappaḍi account of Tiruppāṇ-Ālvār is meagre still, though the later hagiographers have woven a fairly full picture round this sparse material offered. It is the story of the low caste Bhakta attaining the highest through the unbounded grace of the Lord. This story of Pāṇ-Perumā playing on his 'Yal' the live long day from a lone spot in the distant river bed, the grace of the Lord which brought him to the Sanctum on the shoulders of the highest of Brahmins and the ultimate bliss which he attained reveal the universality of the Bhakti cult as no episode can.<sup>4</sup> Apart from the traditional order of the Ārāyirappaḍi again, which places him between Tonḍaradippoḍi and Tirumaṅgai we have absolutely no other evidence to determine his age independently.

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3. M. R. Ayyangar-Alvargal kālanilai p.

4. Compare the story of Tiruppāṇ Ālvār with that of the Śaiva Saint Tiru-Nīla Kāṇṭha Yālpāṇar.

## CHAPTER IX

### TIRUMAṆGAI ĀLVĀR

We get a fairly full account of the life of Tirumaṅgai Ālvār in the Ārāyirappaḍi Guruparampara Prabhāvam. It is but natural that the author of D. S. Caritam slightly varied the sequence of the Ārāyirappaḍi narrative to suit his purpose in assembling together Periyālvār, Āṇḍāl and almost all the other saints round the one attractive theme of the Kāvya, i.e., the marriage of Śrī Āṇḍāl with Śrī Raṅganātha. Later tradition, however, is overburdened with a mass of legend fostered by imagination on the one hand and misrepresentations of passages in the Ālvār's own works on the other. Thus the plain Ārāyirappaḍi narrative of the humbling of the Buddha image at Nagapatam – in itself of doubtful varacity – has given rise to colourful tales of vile robbery and wanton – decait and even cruelty on the part of the Ālvār, and stories have been woven round conventional utterances regarding the Bhaktas' wordly life and pleasures of existence.<sup>1</sup> It is very necessary, therefore, to rely on what, after careful examination, appears to be ancient and continuous tradition, without any forced interpretation of the Ālvār's own works.

#### WAS HE THE LOST OF THE ĀLVARS?

The persistent and almost accepted tradition that Tirumaṅgai was the last of the Ālvārs may now be

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1. See Prapannāmṛtam for the story of Tirumaṅgai.

examined. We have already seen that we cannot rely on the Jayantī-Māla dates and much less on the D. S. Caritam account. The Ārayirappaḍi deals with the life of Nammālvār, last among the saints. The implication of chronological order in the Jīyar's narration would indeed be clear from the introductory lines to the life of Kulaśekhara.<sup>2</sup> These lines would show that the life of Nammālvār coming as it did, next to Tirumaḷisai in the chronological order, was specially dealt with last on account of his particular importance among the saints. We have therefore to infer that Tirumaṅgai Ālvār was the last among them according to the Jīyar's Chronology. Nevertheless, the possibility of the Ālvār's contemporaneity with anyone or more of the others is not precluded, and we have already referred to the specific mention of Tirumaṅgai's contemporaneity with Toṇḍa-raḍippoḍi Ālvār in the Ārayirappaḍi<sup>3</sup>. It turns out thus, that even the Ārayirappaḍi evidence is not quite conclusive on the point and particularly so as it merely gives the month and the Nakṣatra for the birth of these saints.

Ofter times the story of inauguration of the Tiru-Adhyayana Utsavam in Śrīraṅgam by the Ālvār is cited to support the contention. Now, all that we know about this institution in the Śrīraṅgam temple is from later day accounts<sup>4</sup>. The Jīyar's narration of the life of Tirumaṅgai

2. See section on Kulśekhara - P. F. N. ante.

3. Ārayirappaḍi Ed. Srivaiṣṇava Grantha Mudrapaka Sabha.

4. Parakālanpadi, an obscure pamphlet, for details regarding it.



makes no mention of it at all. Even these laterday accounts do not make it clear whether Tirumaṅgai organised the recital of Nammālvār's Tiruvaymōḷi only or the whole of the Nālāyiram while the latter may be deemed improbable, the temple practice would seem to affirm it. What seems more probable than either is that the Utsavam for the ceremonial recital of the whole of the Nālāyiram was instituted long after the lives of the Ālvārs by the early Ācāryas of Vaiṣṇavism, if that were so, there seem to be no particular reason to hold that Tirumaṅgai was the last of the Ālvārs on the basis of the Adhyayana institution in the Śrīraṅgam temple. At any rate, the history of the institution itself requires to be carefully investigated before we can draw chronological conclusions from it.

Tradition apart, there is ample evidence in the Ālvār's own work, the Periya Tirumōḷi on which we can proceed to determine his date. Among several passages referring to Kings and contemporary events, the most important from our point of view may be examined.

1. *The reference to 'Vairamēgha':*— In his 'ten' on Aṭṭabhuyakaram at Kāñci the Ālvār makes mention of the fact that the city was full of the prowess and glory of a certain monarch called Varamēgha. The passage in question runs as follows:—

‘மன்னவன் தொண்டையர் கேள் வணங்கும்  
நீண்முடிமாலை வயிரமேகன் தன்வலிதன்புகழ்  
சூழ்ந்த கச்சி அட்டபுயகரத்து

(P. Tirumōḷi 2, 8, 10.)

In its most straightforward and simple interpretation the passage will be seen to refer to a 'Tonḍaiyarkōn' besides 'Vairamēgha' and it would also appear that the former was doing obeisance to the latter. A free rendering of the passage in English may be stated as follows:—

'The Aṭṭabhuyakaram at Kāñci which was full of prowess and glory of Vairamēgha (decked)) with the garland of the crowns of monarchs doing obeisance to him and to whom the lord of the Tondaiyar was doing obeisance'

It needs no pointing out that 'Tonḍaiyarkon' refers to the Pallava monarch of the time and 'Vairmēghan' must equally clearly refer to another monarch who probably over ran Kanchi and compelled obeisance from the former. Such a state of affairs in Pallava History when Kāñci was conquered and the Pallava had to submit, though for a time, to a 'Vairamēgha' is easily seen in Dantidurga's (Rāṣṭrakūṭa) conquest of Kāñci in 754. A. D. on the basis of inscriptional records mentioning at once the conquest and the possession of the title by the Rāṣṭrakūṭa monarch<sup>1</sup>. The Pallava monarch of the time being Nandivarman Pallava Malla, the Alvar may be understood to be referring to a contemporary even as is implied in the words 'Vaṇaṅgum' (doing obeisance) in the passage<sup>5</sup>

The objection to this interpretation, viz., that the Ālvār who has generally sung the glories of the Pallava

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5. K. Srinivāsa Pillai - 'Tamiḻar Varalāru'.

monarch of his time is not likely to have referred even casually to his humiliation<sup>5</sup> need not be taken seriously, as it would appear from the records that the contest ended honourably for Pallavamalla with his marriage to Reva the daughter of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa.<sup>6</sup>

There may be just this little difficulty, however, in interpreting the passage as above. If 'Vaṇaṅgum' in the above passage is taken as the very referring itself to 'Tonḍaiyarkōṇ', then the adjectival phrase qualifying 'Vairamēghan' would stand as 'Nīṇmuḍimālai'. The meaning of this phrase as such would not be so clear as that of the whole phrase 'Vaṇaṅgu Nīṇmuḍimālai'. If, however, the phrase 'Nīṇmuḍimālai' itself can convey adequate meaning independently then the passage can easily refer to the conquest and suggest the contemporaneity of the Ālvār with Nandivarman Pallavamalla.

We now turn to the other interpretation which would see a reference to only one monarch in the passage namely 'Tonḍaiyarkōṇ'.<sup>7</sup> The rendering of the lines would then be such as would take the whole phrase 'Vaṇaṅgunīṇmuḍimālai Vairamēghan' to be in apposition with 'Tonḍaiyarkōṇ' suggesting the meaning of the entire passage in some such way as the following.

'The Aṭṭabhuyakarm at Kāñci full of the prowess and glory of Vairamēgha, the lord of the Tonḍaiyar (decked) with the garland of the crowns of monarchs doing obeisance to him.'

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6.

7. Ibid. K. G. Sankara also holds this view. (J. O. R. S. 1927).

Now the question arises – who is this Pallava Vairamēgha referred to by the Ālvar?

It has been suggested that it could have been Pallava Malla himself and that he could have very well borne the title either independently as his forefathers possessed the titles like ‘Chitramēgha’, ‘Mahāmēgha’, and ‘Śrīmēgha’ or in honour of his father-in-law the Rāṣṭrakūṭa Dantidurga<sup>8</sup>. While the latter suggestion is clearly ingenious, the former must be deemed baseless as we hear of no inscriptional record giving this title to Nandivarman. Besides, it seems quite absurd to maintain that the same title was borne by the Rāṣṭrakūṭa monarch, his son-in-law, his grand-son and others, after him in a series.

Pandit M. Raghava Ayyangar would further argue the title ‘Vairamēgha’ for Nandivarman on the basis of the close correspondence between the phrase ‘Vaṇaṅgu nīṇmuḍi-mālai Vairamēghan and the Sanskrit phrase ‘Pranatāvanīpati Makuṭa-mālikāḷidha – caraṇāravinda referring to him in inscriptions. He would even presume that the Ālvar merely translated the Sanskrit phrase referring to him.<sup>9</sup> It must, however, be clear from similar expressions referring to the glory of kings in general in inscriptions and literature, that the phrase, either in Sanskrit or in Tamil, is conventionally used to denote the might of any monarch.<sup>10</sup> In other words,

8. M. R. Ayyaṅgār Āl. Kala Nilai P. 102.

9. Ibid. p. 103.

10. See the opening verse of the ‘ten’ on ‘Paramēśwara Viṇṇagaram’ Nālayiram.

while the Sanskritism of the phrase 'Vaṇaṅguṇiṇmuḍimālai' might be granted, there seems to be no reason to make it refer to Nandivarman particularly.

On the other hand, it is clear, that the earliest Pallava who bore that title was Dantivarman, son and successor of Nandivarman Pallavamalla<sup>11</sup>. It is but natural that he acquired the title by descent from his maternal grand-father Dantidurga Raṣtrakūta. We may then conclude from the manner of Tirumoli reference as implied in the term 'Sulnda' in the present tense that the Āḷvār was a contemporary of Dantivarman Pallava.<sup>12</sup>

We have so far seen that the passage may be differently interpreted the contemporaneity of the Āḷvār either with Pallavamalla or his son Dantivarman.

## 2. *The reference to the rout of the northern power :-*

Verse of the Periya Tirumoli containing as it does a definitely clear contemporary reference will seem to clinch the issue further. "There is a clear allusion in it to a battle in which the 'Tennan' and a northern king were routed by the warriors of Nāṅgūr. From the context, it is clear that the Āḷvār is referring to a Pallava victory over the Pāṇḍya and a northern power, for 'Tennan' in the Āḷvār's works cannot, but mean the Pāṇḍya king. It is equally clear from history that the northern power could have been no other than the Cāḷukyas,

11. S. I. I. Vol. 6 No. 355 p. 167.

12. M. R. Ayyangar has shown that it is in the present tense contra see K. G. Sankara J. O. R. S. 1927.

the agelong enemies of the Pallavas who often coalesed with the Tamil powers against Pallava dominion. It follows then that the battle in which the warriors of Nāṅgūr are celebrated to have worsted the Pāṇḍya and the Caḷukya must have been one of the episodes in the long series of the Pallava - Caḷukya wars : the Nāṅgūr warriors must have fought in the ranks of the Pallava monarch.

Such being the allusion in the passage, we may now proceed to ascertain the date of the probable encounter referred to by the Āḷvār. Paṇḍit M. Rāghava Ayyangar has suggested that it must refer to the victory of Paramēśvara Varman Pallava over the Caḷukya Vikramāditya-1 in the battle of Peruvaḷanallūr in the Cōḷa country. He would infer the Pāṇḍya alliance with the northern power on the presumption that Vikramāditya should have marched down to south and encamped at Uragapura only with the aid of the southern power. He would further point out that the final battle having taken place in Peruvaḷanallūr in the Cōḷa Country, the warriors of Nāṅgūr would very well be inferred to have taken part in it.<sup>13</sup>

An examination of the available record will show that the above is a misreading of the course of events leading to the memorable battle. The history of the previous Caḷukya campaigns has revealed that the invading army first directed its attack on Kāñci. The Pallava forces usually met the invading force not far away from the capital and the issue was decided in and around the fortified walls of Kāñci first. There is no

13. M. R. Ayyangar \* Āḷ. Kālanilai pp 111-119.

valid ground to think that Vikramāditya-I made a departure either in the route he took or in the method he adopted in his southern campaign. ° The Gadwāl plates do point to the encampment at Urāgapura <sup>14</sup> But the inference from this need not necessarily be that Vikramāditya advanced south through the Koṅḡu country with Pāṇḍya assistance. He would as well come first to Kāñci and lead his victorious army down south as far as Urāgapura. In fact, this is what we get from the Gadwāl plates. It mentions unequivocally the initial conquest of Kāñci, and this is corroborated by the Kurnool plates of Vikramāditya-I<sup>15</sup>, and the Sōrab grant of Vinayāditya.<sup>16</sup> Having assumed that Vikramāditya came direct to Urāgapura and encamped there and that subsequently he was met and beaten at Peruvaḷanallūr, the Pāṇḍit has forced to his credit the evidence of Gadwāl Plate regarding the conquest of Kāñci <sup>17</sup> That there is absolutely no need to do so has been shown by Rev. Heras in his 'studies in Pallava History.' (Page 42-43) He has pointed out how the conquest of Kāñci was the first phase of Vikramāditya's expedition, which, having begun victoriously enabled him to run through the Pallava territory and advance as far south as Urāgapura and encamp there. While the Cāḷukya army was resting on its glory,

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14. Ep. In. Vol. 10. p 100.

15. J.B.B. R.A.S Vol. 16. p. 226

16. I. A. 19 pp. 151-152

17. M R. Ayyangar Āḷ, Kālanilai-116. He cites Dr. Hultzch in support of his conclusion. (Ibid. F.N.2)

Paramēśvara Varman seems to have rallied round his forces, attacked the invader at Peruvaṇanallūr and put him to an ignominious flight.<sup>18</sup>

We have seen that the southern march of the invader and the encampment at Uragapura after the fall of Kāñci could have been possible for the victorious army without any aid from the Tamil princes. At any rate, there seems to be no evidence from the records of any Tamil Power having actually supported Vikramāditya in this campaign. We are thus unable to see any clear reference to the defeat of a 'Tennan' or Pāṇḍya in this campaign.

Such an active alliance of the Pāṇḍya to the invading Cālukya is clearly pointed out by the records referring to Vikramāditya-II's invasion of Kāñci during the reign of Nandivarman Pallavamalla cir 735 A.D. (Heras)<sup>19</sup> From the Kēndur and the Vakkalēri Plates of Kīrtivarman-II<sup>20</sup>, the Udayēndran Plates and other Cōḷa records<sup>21</sup> we see that Nandi was defeated and forced to flee from post to pillar in the Cōḷa country pursued by the Cālukyan heir-apparent till he finally took refuge behind the walls of Nandipura.

We are also able to gather from the Cōḷa records that all this was rendered possibly by the confused state of affairs in the early part of Pallavamallā's reign wherein

18. Heras. 'Studies in Pallava History' pp. 42-47

19. Heras. 'Studies in Pallava History' Pages 42-47.

20. Ep. Ind. Vol. 9.

21. S. I. I. Vol. 2 p. 371.



Citramāya aided by the Tamil powers attacked Nandi. It is just possible that Vikramāditya, having conquered Kāñci would have allied himself with Citramāya also. We know how finally Udayacandra, the faithful General of the Pallava raised the seige of Nandipura and defeated his enemies and established him on the throne. The hostility shown by the Tamil powers to the Pallava in all these campaigns would enable us to infer that the reference to the rout of the Pandya along with the Cālukya in the passage might well be to these campaigns in the reign of Nandivarman Pallavamalla<sup>22</sup>. And as the manner of the reference to the warriors of Nāṅgur who took part in these campaigns shows contemporaneity unmistakably, we will not be far wrong in assigning Tirumaṅgai Ālvār to the latter half of the 8th century A.D.

### THE CONTEMPORANEITY OF THE ĀLVĀR WITH GÑANASAMBANDHA

It is said that this aspect of tradition is a mere fib of imagination suggested by the proximity of their places of birth and many striking parallellisms in their works. Many scholars were, however, content to

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22. One view of the date of Nandivarman Pallava Malla and his successors is that it has to be reconsidered in the light of the possible date A.D. 728-29 to 730-31 arrived at for Paramēśwara-II, on the basis of inscriptions. See Art. on 'The Date of Pallava Paramēśwara-II' by N. Lakshminārayan Rao - Journal of Indian Hist. Vol. 13 Pt. 3 1952 pp. 287-292.

ignore the story altogether and this was not made the basis for determining the date of either Tirumaṅgai Āṭvār or Gṇānasambandha. The author of the *Āṭvārgaḷ Kālanilai* has, however, based his discussion on the age of the former on this among other data.<sup>23</sup> We find thus that there are sharply differing viewpoints about the tradition and it will be worth our while to examine it.<sup>24</sup>

The first point to ascertain about any tradition as evidence for history is its continuity. In regard to this, we see that the earliest version of the *Āṭvāyirappaḍi* declares that Tirumaṅgai Āṭvār and Gṇānasambandha met each other and that a discussion ensued ending in the discomfiture of the Śaiva Saint.<sup>25</sup> The *D. S. Caritam* offers a slightly varied version pointing to a friendly discourse between the protagonists of the two faiths and giving a dignified turn to the whole incident. It is not surprising that the *Prapannāmṛtam* has followed the version of *Āṭvāyirappaḍi*, as, in fact the whole of the Sanskrit work has been shown to have followed the earliest work of the *Jīyar*. It seems reasonable, therefore, to grant the continuity of tradition in this case, at least as far back as we can possibly get to, viz, the times of the *Jīyar*.

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23. *Āl. Kālanilai* p. 89.

24. K. A. Nīlakaṇṭha Śāstri thinks that it is a beautiful legend. *Cōlas*, Madras University Series 1955 p. 636.

25. *Āṭvāyirappaḍi* Ed. Śrīvaiṣṇava Mudrāpaka Sabha.

Since the author of the *Āṛāyirappaḍi* himself was far removed from the times of the *Āḷvārs* and *Nāyanmārs*, it would be worthwhile examining if this tradition can find support either in the works of the two saints or in other contemporary or later literature secular or religious. We find that there is none such anywhere except in the *Vaiṣṇava* hagiographers' accounts which may well be deemed one sided and therefore unacceptable for purposes of history.

The next stage of our enquiry would be to see if the dates of the two saint arrived at on other date would admit of their contemporaneity. Paṇḍit M. Raghava Ayyangar has suggested that they would. Having established that he must have been a contemporary of Nandivarma Pallavamalla, he proceeds to discuss the date of Sambandha on all available data the most important of which is the date of the destruction of *Vātapi* in which *Siruttonḍar*, the contemporary of *Gñāna-sambandha* is said to have taken part. He points out that there must have been a second invasion of *Vātapi* on the wake of the *Peruṇṇāṇallūr* battle cir. 657 A. D. and that this should have been the campaign in which *Siruttonḍar* took part. Assigning *Sambandha* to cir. 670 to 686 on this basis, he would declare that this, along with the other date fro *Tirumaṅgai Āḷvār*, viz., the latter half of the 8th Century, could very well establish their contemporaneity.<sup>26</sup>

We have already gone through the details of *Vikramaditya* - I's campaign in the south - from his initial success at *Kāñci* to his ultimate discomfiture at *Peru-*

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26. M. R. Ayyangar - *Āḷ. Kalanilai PP.* 106-109.

valanallur. Apart from the fact of the Cālukya's flight after that battle, we do not find any mention of the capture of Vātāpi even in Pallava records. And yet the conclusion as to a second invasion of the cālukyan capital is made to rest on two grounds. (1) The description of Paramēśvaravarman Pallava as the 'destroyer of the city of Raṇarasika.' (2) The date of the Koḍumbājur chieftain Paradurgamardana who bore the title 'Vātāpijit.' The two premises may now be examined.

It is true that Paramēśvaravarman has been declared to have destroyed the city of Raṇarasika. It is clear also that Raṇarasika was a Biruda of Vikramaditya-I,<sup>27</sup>. Pro. Dubreuil is of opinion that this Raṇarasikapura is no other than Uragapura where the northern invader encamped for a while prior to his final defeat by the Pallava forces and wherefrom he issued the Gadwāl Plates. The objection that Uragapura was but a temporary camp of the monarch cannot be a very serious one against this identity as the fact of his fairly prolonged stay there must be granted, and the city therefore could well have got its name from the victor from Kāñci at least from the time being. The further suggestion that Paramēśvaravarman did not proclaim for himself the same title 'Vātāpikoṇḍa' as his grand-father out of deference to him loses strength when we see that several kings have borne ancestral titles without any corresponding achievement to their credit. The identity of Raṇarasikapura with Vātāpi remains thus to be substantiated.

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27. Ep. Indi. Vol. X Page 101.

The learned Paṇḍit arrived at Cir. 670 as the date for Paradurgamardana calculating backwards from the probable date of his great-grandson Vikramakēśari, whom he presumes to have been a contemporary of Dantivarman Pallava cir. 780 on the basis of an inscription at Malayāḍippaṭṭi. The conquest of Vātapi as implied in his title 'Vātapijit' - evidently as an ally of his Pallava suzerain - ascribable to cir. 670 must therefore be distinct from the earlier exploit of Narasimhavarman Pallava.<sup>28</sup> It may be observed that the date of the Koḍumbālūr chieftain has been arrived at rather vaguely on indefinite data, and the calculation even if the data were definite, can but lead to very approximate result. We will not be on safe grounds if we infer a second invasion of Vātapi on this basis entirely. The chronology of the Koḍumbālūr chieftains requires to be established independently after careful consideration before we can proceed to draw conclusion from it.

The arguments for a second invasion and destruction of Vātapi by Paramēśwaravarman Pallava are thus seen to be inconclusive. There seems to be no valid ground for shifting Siruttoṇḍar's campaign to any other event than the wellknown exploit of Narasimhavarman and bring him and his contemporary Gñānasambandha nearer to the times of Tirumangai Āḷvar.

The problem may still be viewed from the point of view of the accepted date of Gñānasambandha based

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28. Āḷ. Kālanilai - 2nd Edn. P.109.

on Narasimha varman's invasion of Vātāpi. This incident has been variously dated in Cir. 637 (Heras) 642 (fleet) and so on.<sup>29</sup> Whatever the exact date we may safely presume Sambandha to have lived about the year 640 A.D. The sixteen-year duration of life ascribed to him by tradition is perhaps but an exaggerated way of stating the wonderful powers of the poet saint. If that were so, we will not be far wrong in concluding that he should in all probability have lived up to the last quarter of the 7th Century at the latest. We have already seen that Tirumāngai Ālvār must have lived some years at least after 736 A. D. It would thus appear that there is an intervening period of nearly a century between the lives of the two saints. It is rather difficult to infer their contemporaneity normally under these circumstances, though the possibility is not absolutely precluded. Anyway it does not seem to be quite safe to assert one way or the other. After all it may well be that tradition itself originated—from this close proximity in point of time – apart from many other similarities between these two hymnists from the land of the Cāuvery.

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29. Rev. Heras. 'Studies in Pallava History' PP. 62-63.

## CHAPTER X

### NAMMĀLVĀR AND MADHURAKAVI

Nammālvār possesses a unique distinction among the Ālvārs. He is considered the 'Avayavi' while the rest are called the 'Avayavas' - as if to establish his superiority and the fact that he embodies in himself all that is good and great in the Vaiṣṇava Hymnists. This fact seems to have been very early recognised by Pinbaḷgiya jīyar himself in his introduction to the life of Kulaśekhara already noticed.<sup>1</sup> Greater is the Alvar's distinction of being recognised as an Ācārya also. This will be clear when it is realised that an Ācārya or spiritual preceptor plays a very important role as the sole and effective mediator between the Bhakta and the Lord according to the accepted canons of Vaiṣṇava Philosophy. This fact about the Ālvār was also early recognised. In the accredited line of Ācāryic succession commencing from Śrīman Nārāyaṇa he is said to come next only to Lakshmi and Sēnai Nātha after Viṣṇu and then begins the line of the Ācāryas on this earth. Nāthamuni is acknowledged to be his disciple and from then the Guruparampara continues through Ālavandār, Rāmānuja and others upto the recognised Ācāryas of the present day. This unique distinction enjoyed by the Ālvār may be due to the highly developed and systematic thought revealed in his Tiruvāymoḷi. The fact that this part of

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1. See section on Kulaśekhara. P.

the Nālayiram has no less than six commentaries by the later Ācāryas shows that Nammālvār's work was deemed very important.

We saw how Nammālvār is acknowledged to be the first Acārya, Nāthamuni being placed next to him in the order of succession. This, together with tradition that Nāthamuni secured the Nālayiram collection from the Ālvār, has led to the inference that he must have been the last of the hymnists. This aspect of tradition may now be examined.

The following are the relevant facts contained in the Ārayirappaḍi regarding the acquisition of the Nālayiram by Nāthamuni. On hearing the casual recitation of a 'ten' of the Tiruvāimoḷi, Nāthamuni went to Ālvārtirunagari in eager search for the whole work, where he was informed by Parāṅkuśa dasa, a disciple of Madhurakavi, that there were neither persons who could recite the Nālayiram nor the preserved work itself, as the whole of it had passed into obscurity. He was further directed to recite the ten verses beginning with 'Kaṇṇinum Śiruttāmbu' of Madhurakavi Ālvār before the idol of Nammālvār – which direction he had himself got from Madhurakavi, his Guru in order to obtain the work through his grace. This was done and the Nālayiram along with other Śāstras was revealed to Nāthamuni by the Ālvār as an 'Aśariri'. Such being the story of the revelation, one is not warranted in inferring Nāthamuni's actual discipleship to Nammālvār.

The story of the revelation of the Ālvār's works and other Śāstras – with so much of the mythological in it has evidently a purpose behind it namely to establish a



continuity in their transmission through an unbroken line of Ācāryic descent.

Thus the story, while attempting to establish this continuity, can neither suggest that Nāthamuni was the immediate disciple of the Āḷvār, nor that the latter was the last among the Vaiṣṇava saints.

Recognised tradition on the other hand places him fifth in order after the Mudal-Āḷvār and Tirumālīśai. Later traditionalists have all followed the Jīyar's order as given in the Āṛāyirappaḍi. Vēdānta-Dēśika has referred to the Āḷvārs collectively in two of his works the Ādhikāra Saṅgraha and the Prabandhasāra. In the first stanza of the former expatiating on the importance of the works of the Āḷvārs, the name of Nammāḷvār stands fourth. But then it is not possible to say whether it is the chronological order intended by him in that work. In the other composition on the other hand, where he gives particular of the place and date of birth of the Āḷvārs, their works etc., he devotes a stanza to each Āḷvār, and it certainly seems possible to infer a chronological order in it. Stanza six devoted to Nammāḷvār places him fifth and this makes the position of Vēdānta Dēśika clear on this point.

Mr. K. Srinivāsa Pillai, the author of the 'Tamiḷar Varalaṅgu' seems to infer chronological order of names from the compilation called the 'Iyal-Śattu. This is as described a collection of several stanzas by different authors grouped together for purposes of ceremonial recitation by Varavaramuni. As such there is no room

to infer any definite order from it. His 'Upadēśarattina-mālai' on the other hand can be said to mention the Āḷvār's names in a chronological order and we find that he also places him fifth among the Āḷvārs.<sup>2</sup>

While the D. S. Caritam has actually dealt with the life of Nammāḷvār fifth in order, the Prapannāmṛtam has followed the Āṛāyirappaḍi literally in dealing with it last and stating the reason for doing so in the exact words of the Āṛāyirappaḍi. Thus tradition seems to be persistent in placing Nammāḷvār fifth in the order of the saints.<sup>3</sup>

There are some who would point to an isolated 'Tanian Sloka' ascribed to Parāśarabhaṭṭa and the 'Rāmānuja Nūṛṇṇandādi' of Tiruvarangattamudanār as suggesting that Nammāḷvār was the last among them. On examination, however it would be found that it is not possible to infer a chronological order from Bhaṭṭar's śloka which includes Rāmānuja and places him before Parāṅkuśamuni (Nammāḷvār).<sup>4</sup>

Nor would it be possible to do so from Amudanār's work. It is true that the reference to each one of the Āḷvārs is found in separate stanzas, and that Nammāḷvār is mentioned last. Yet, this will not specify any chronological order as is evident from the fact that

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2. Verse No. 4 'Upadēśarattina-mālai'.

3. K. G. Śeṣha Iyer, B.A., B.L., art. in the Silver Jubilee memorial volume, Karandaikkāṭṭurai on Nammāḷvār is inclined to follow tradition. He assigns Nammāḷvār to the sixth Century A. D.

Tiruppāṇālvār is placed immediately after the Mudalālvārs, Tirumaḷisai coming after him, and that Tonḍaraḍippoḍi is placed anterior to Kulaśēkhara and Periyālvār. If we are to take this as the order intended, we shall be at a loss to explain why the later hagiographers like the Jīyar deviated so much from it. Another point may be noted in this connection. Tirumaṅgai Ālvār is mentioned twice, first at the outset in the 2nd stanza and later after Āṇḍāl in the seventeenth stanza of the work. If we infer strict chronological order, we may have to place Tirumaṅgai Ālvār first and the last but one among the Ālvārs at the same time, which would be clearly an absurd position to maintain. The fact is that the author of the Nūṛṇṇaḍādi was not a hagiographer by any means and his purpose was not the exposition of any chronological order even in the individual mention of the names of the Ālvārs. They must be deemed to have come in for mention just casually without any such specific implication. From the fore-going it would be clear that the traditional order would place Nammālvār fifth in order after the Mudalālvārs and Tirumaḷisai.

Tradition after, we shall proceed to determine the age of Nammālvār and Madhurakavi on other available evidence.

The late Mr. T. A. Gōpinatha Rao in his Madras University lectures suggested certain identifications connecting the names of the Ālvār and his disciple Madhurakavi with certain facts contained in the two Ānamalai records, cir. 770 A.D., of the Pāṇḍya king Parāntaka Neḍunjaḍayan. He was certainly right in inferring from

the Āḷvār's names 'Māran' and 'Kārimāran' that 'Kāri' must have been the name of the father of the Āḷvār. But the further identification of this 'Kāri' with Māran-kāri the Uttara-māntrin of the said inscriptions seems to be an inference from the name 'Parāṅkuśa' ascribed to the Āḷvār. For, it is surmised that this name was given to the Āḷvār in honour of the Pāṇḍya Parāṅkuśa the father of Neḡunjaḍaiyan and liege lord of the Uttaramantrin. A scrutiny of the name 'Parāṅkuśa' would however show that it was but a title conferred on him. That it must have been conferred by posterity only will be clear from the fact that the Āḷvār does not call himself by that name anywhere in his works. It seems therefore unreasonable to connect this title of the Āḷvār with the name or may be even the title of the Pāṇḍya king in any manner whatsoever. .

There is much less ground for connection the name 'Madhurakavi' of the Āḷvār with 'Madhurakavi' the surname of the Uttaramantrin. The suggestion that the Āḷvār should have given his father's surname as a 'Dāsyānāma' to his disciple seems to be farfetched. For, the term 'Madhurakavi' as the name of an individual occurs in several inscriptions showing that it had become a fairly common name adopted by many people; and it may be well be that the Uttaramantrin himself got the surname after the celebrated name of the Āḷvār. Indeed, if an inference is possible from the inscriptional record, we may even take this date cir. 770 A.D. as the lower limit for Madhurakavi Āḷvār and his Ācārya Nammāḷvār on the assumption that some period of time should have elapsed between the age of the saint and the adoption of his name by the common folk. This may perhaps

point to about 660 A.D. as the age of Madhurakavi and Nammālvār in itself not quite inconsistent with the traditional order given above.

While the late Mr. T. A. Gopinatha Rao, attempted to establish the contemporaneity of the Ālvār with Parāntaka Neḍunjaḍaiyan, Mr. G. Venkobarao has tried to show that his reign would fix the upper limit for the date of the Ālvār. His identification of Śrīvara maṅgalam sung by the Alvar with the Śrīvaramaṅgalam of the Madras Museum Plates of Parāntaka seems to be quite sound<sup>5</sup>. For, from the manner of reference to the place in the Ālvār's works as Śrīvaramaṅgai' and 'Śrīvara-maṅgalam' in its short and full forms respectively, it is clear that it should have been named after a king of that name. This is only in accordance with the very common practice of naming places after the names and titles of monarchs. It being clear from the M. M. Plates<sup>6</sup> that the place Śrīvaramaṅgalam was so named after 'Śrīvara' the title of Parāntaka, there seems to be good reason to identify this village with the place sung by the Ālvār. The date of the above mentioned plates cir. 785 A. D. would thus be the upper limit for the date of the Nammālvār.

The upper limit fixed on the basis of the reference to 'Śrīvaramaṅgalam' may have to be shifted to the age of Varaguṇa on the basis of the reference to Varaguṇa-maṅgai in the Ālvār's works<sup>7</sup>. On the analogy of Śrī-

5. See Sen-Tamiḷ Series Vol. 4, pp. 228-229.

6. The Madras Museum Plates. Ind.Ant.vol.22.

7. See Tiruvāymoḷi 9, 3, 4.

varamaṅgalam above cited it is possible to infer that 'Varaguṇamaṅgai' is short for Varaguṇamaṅgalam, and that it must have got its name from a monarch of that name. Two Pāṇḍya kings of that name appear in the geneological lists, one of whom can be assigned to cir 862 A.D. though the other Varaguna must be assigned to an earlier date it is not at present possible to say when exactly he ruled. All that we can say now on the basis of the reference to Varaguṇamaṅgai is that the upper limit may have to be shifted down to cir. 820 A. D.

We thus find that the internal references contained in the Āḷvār's work point to a late date after 800 at any rate. Taking Nāthamuni's date as the unmistakable lower limit for the date of the Āḷvār and allowing for the lapse of a generation atleast between him and the first Ācārya, we may have to assign Nammāḷvār to about the first quarter of the ninth century at the earliest.

Thus Nammāḷvār and Madhurakavi have to be considered the last of the Āḷvārs. Apart from the style and diction, this large number of Philosophical Ideas in Nammāḷvār's works would support this conclusion.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY OF THE ĀLVĀRS

The hymns of the Ālvārs constitute a body of devotional literature revealing the characteristic features of the distinctive devotional philosophy of South India<sup>1</sup> which is regarded as an essential element in Indian Religions. Though it is difficult to find any systematic exposition of philosophical ideas in these inspired songs, they provide also the essential basis for the development of the religion and philosophy of Vaiṣṇavism<sup>2</sup>.

An analysis of the general theme of these works would reveal the following essential doctrines.

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1. "Though the monotheistic speculation and the importance of the doctrine of devotion can be traced even to some of the Ṛg- Vēda hymns and the earlier religious literature such as the Gīta and the Mahābhārata and Viṣṇupurāṇa, yet it is in the traditional songs of the Ālvārs —... that we find a special emphasis on our emotional relation to God" Das Gupta, A History of Indian Philosophy Vol. 3 preface p. 9.

2. "Without referring to the nature of the devotional philosophy of Ālvārs, the treatment of the philosophy of Rāmānuja and his followers would be historically defective" — Ibid. p. 8.

1. *The Doctrine of Bhakti*:- Though it is the general theme of the hymns of all the Ālvārs, its various aspects are clearly revealed in Nammālvār's works.- The foremost of these aspects is the 'Dāsyabhāva' or the attitude of a Servant to one's master that the bhakta feels towards God and which expresses itself in several service to acts of Him. It is indeed influenced by the spirit of service (Kaiṅkarya) to Him.

It is an attitude which makes the bhakta feel that in every one of his actions he must be imbued with this spirit of kaiṅkarya to God. The Bhakta's longing for service to God is so intense as to crave for the closest association with Him in such a way as to desire a sense of possession in Him. Nammālvār says in fact that the realization of the proximity of God is much more desirable than the attainment of emancipation. True liberation, according to him, consists in attaining the position of God's servant (Dāsatva) - an attitude which along with others like Śarīratva, tanmayatva and Kāntatva forms an important philosophical relationship recognised in Viśiṣṭādvaita<sup>3</sup>.

The parental attitude of bhakti expressing the affection of the mother to son leads the Ālvārs to imagine themselves as Mothers and pour out in loving words their affection to God as the Child Kṛiṣṇa. This attitude of the loving mother to the child is typified mainly in the songs of Periyālvār.

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3. Refer Dr. K. C. Varadāchāri - Aspects of bhakti - University of Mysore Publication (1956) p. 2.



But, of all the types or attitudes of bhakti the most important and that which is dominant in the works of Tirumaṅgai and Nammālvār more than in those of the others is that of the female lover (Nāyaki) – to her husband (Nāyaka) – Nāyakī bhāva as it is called in Vaiṣṇava phraseology. The idea underlined this bhava is that the real bhakta is one who realises that God is the greatest of all beings (Puruṣōttama) and that every one should subdue his manhood by considering himself as a woman entirely dependent on him. While this was a natural attitude for Andaḷ, it had to be a forced and imagined and therefore a difficult one for the other Ālvārs.

It is said that there is a difference between Tirumaṅgai and Nammālvār in respect of this Nāyaka – Nāyakī bhāva, the lovers attitude to God. Tirumaṅgai's love is said to express the experience of constant companionship with God in such intensely passionate love that in the passionate search for it, is prepared to immolate himself. His Tirumaḍal is a vivid expression of this impasioned love theme.

Nammālvār's verses, on the other hand, reveal a different though equally intense and deep love affection for God as Nāyaka. It does not have the wild rapture and intoxication Tirumaṅgai but expresses itself in constant pursuit of God in an everpresent longing for Him in full possession of body and soul. His Tiruvāymoli expresses what are usually described as the three stages of love, namely, recollection, trance, and rallying. In a series of verses in the Tiruvaymoli he recalls the noble qualities of the god-lover and yearns for his

close company. He wreaths in mental agony when he does not get it and is in a state of utter prostration when, after a temporary union with him, he loses sight of him separation (Viraha) sets in. Then again he rallies round consciousness on having had the vision of God in the form of Kṛṣṇa.

During the agonising periods of separation he sends messages to God, the lover through birds, much in the same way as Tirumangai does in his Tiruneḍuandāṇḍagam to God Sengamāl.

If Nammālvār's intense love of God made him envisage the world and all the creation in it as being the body of God, his actual vision of God enabled him to dwell on his transcendental form and seek direct access to it. But for those who cannot have such direct access or vision of the transcendent form of God (Para) he says there is equal solace in the contemplation of the 'Vibhava' and in the worship of the 'arca' forms. Indeed, several verses in the Tiruvāymoḻi sing the praise of Kṛṣṇa and refer to the holy abodes of the 'Arca' forms of the Lord.

Nammālvār explains the true significance of Bhakti when he says that there is no need at all for any elaborate ritual for worshipping God and what is really needed is the true spirit of devotion to Him.

2. *The Doctrine of prapatti* :- Nammālvār emphasises the Prapatti-mārga or the path of absolute surrender to God as the effective means of securing salvation. It is necessary to distinguish between the doctrines of Bhakti and Prapatti, both of which have

been elaborated in the Ālvār's works generally and in the Works of Nammālvār in particular. Prapatti is said to be the easier path to follow and is open to all irrespective of caste or sex.. While Bhakti or devotion to God in all its aspects may and does involve some activity on the part of Bhakta, prapatti demands and issues out of an extreme state of helplessness (Akiñcana gati,) and hopeless prostration (Kārpaṇya). In fact, Prapatti or absolute surrender to God is the only course open to the human being in such a state of extreme depression and distress. Regarding the manner in which God redeems the 'Prapanna' (the person who has surrendered absolutely to God), there are differences of opinion among the two schools of Vaiṣṇavism. But both are agree on the essential point that it is God's grace that works out his salvation after Prapatti has been made.<sup>4</sup>

3. *The Doctrine of Grace* :— This brings us to the third important doctrine of Vaiṣṇavism emphasised in the works of the Ālvārs. Viz., the Doctrine of Grace. Having said that God's Grace is the only means of attaining salvation and that no effort on our part can secure it, he says that even God's favour cannot be obtained by our effort but only by his grace. But, once we manage to secure His Grace, God Himself cannot stop the benefits that it is bound to confer on the Bhakta. Nammālvār

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4. While the Tēngalais say that there is nothing for the Prapanna to do after Prapatti for salvation, the Vāḍagalais hold that God's Grace will accept him and prepare him for rightful works and thereby only to salvation.

beautifully expresses this idea, viz., that even God's freedom is fettered by his mercy. Here again, there is a difference of opinion between the two schools of Vaiṣṇava thought. The Teṅgalai view of Grace is that it is 'Nirhētuka' (without cause 'Hētu'), while the Vadagalai view is that it is 'Sahētuka'. (with cause). Whatever may be its nature, the doctrine of Grace must be recognised as one of the vital Doctrines of Vaiṣṇavism, one by which every true Vaiṣṇava is taught to look up for salvation not to Nārāyaṇa separately but to Nārāyaṇa in association with Śrī or Lakṣmi. If God (Nārāyaṇa) is the abode of Grace, Śrī (Lakṣmi) is the interceder (Puruṣakari) for the purpose of invoking of that Grace for the redemption of the erring Jīva. We see this vital Doctrine of Vaiṣṇava Philosophy and Religion already emphasised in the Songs of the Āḷvārs.

Āḷvār's Philosophy :—

As already observed the hymns of the Āḷvārs are mainly devotional literature and it is idle to expect any expositions of philosophy from them. However, we find references to the nature of the soul (Ātman) as revealed to him by God in Nammāḷvār's Tiruvāymoḷi. He says that it is eternal and characterised by Gnāna or Intelligence. He describes that the soul is related to God as intimately as 'the predicate to the subject or the attribute to the substance', that it transcends all other categories like the Senses, prāṇa (vital spirit), Manas (Mind) and Will (Buddhi), that it is not subject to 'modification or corruption and that above all it is beyond cognizance of sense knowledge<sup>5</sup>.

5. Das Gupta - History of Indian Philosophy  
Pt. 3 Chap. XVII. p.80.

Another aspect of emotionalism found in the Ālvār's hymns has been pointed out by Prof. Das Gupta. He says that it is natural for a devotee, by a process of auto-suggestion to identify himself with the object of his adoration – Rāma Kṛṣṇa or the Gōpīs as the case may be, so as to transport himself to an imaginary state of love and association with them in all their doings. For instance, Kulaśekhara is said to have so transported himself in an extreme state of emotion on hearing the story of Rāmā's march against Rāvaṇa as to feel that he should help Rāma as a king and actually order his troops to march out with him. This legend apart, we have several sentiments of such emotional feelings expressed by the Ālvārs in that mood of transformation through the influence of Bhakti which made them feel and express their feelings as mother to child Kṛṣṇa and so on. It is said that the Ālvārs for the first to 'move forward in that direction of such emotional transformation<sup>6</sup>.

The foregoing brief review of the Religion and Philosophy of the Ālvārs will show how much the later Ācāryās from Nāthamuni to Rāmānuja owed to them in the formulation of the philosophy of Vaiṣṇavism. It will not only explain why Nammālvār was considered as an Ācārya, in the regular line of apostolic succession, but also the rationale of the 'Ubhaya Vedānta' basis of Viśiṣṭādvaita philosophy.

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6. Ibid. Chap. XVII.

## CHAPTER XII

### ĀCĀRYĀS - NĀTHAMUNI TO RĀMĀNUJA

The period covered by the five generations of Ācāryas from Nāthamuni to Rāmānuja<sup>1</sup> may be justly described as the formative period of Vaiṣṇavism. For, it was during this period that the foundations of its religion and philosophy were securely laid. The traditional Guruparamparā or the line of succession of Ācāryās is enshrined in the following "Taniyan" slokas, or invocation verses, intended for recital by every Sri Vaiṣṇava before he commences the study or recitation of the Divya Prabhandhams and other sacred works. The first of them by Kurattalvan<sup>2</sup> indicates broadly the Guruparamparā commencing from "Laksmīnātha and ending with one's own (the reciter's own) Ācārya (Asmadācārya) with Nāthamuni and Yāmuna in the middle (Nātha Yāmuna Madhyamām) The fuller list containing the traditional order of succession of all the Ācāryas is given in another invocatory Sloka<sup>3</sup>. The list beginning

1. Nāthamuni, Pundarikākṣa, Kāmamiśra, Yāmuna, Rāmānuja is the order of succession of Ācāryās.

2. Lakshmīnāthā Samārambhām Nātha Yāmuna Madhyamām Asmadācārya Paryāntām Vandē Guruparamparām.

3. Asmad Dēśikam Asmadīya Parāmacāryān Aśēṣaṇ Gurūn Śrīman Lakṣmaṇa Yōgi Puṅgava Mahapurnam Munim Yāmunam Rāmam Padmavilōchanam Nātham Sāthadvesiṇam, Senēsam Indīrasahacaram Nārāyanam Samśraye.

from one's own Ācārya is given in the ascending order as follows:- Asmad-Dēśikam (my own Guru), Asmadīya Parmācāryān (my Guṛu's Gurus), Aśeṣān Gurūn (all other Gurus), Śrīman Lakṣmaṇa Yōgi Puṅgava (Rāmānuja), Mahāpūrṇan (Periya Nambi), Munim Yāmunaṁ (Yāmuna), Rāma (Rāmamiśra), Padmavilōchanam (Pundarikāksha), Nātham (Nāthamuni), Śaṭhadvēṣiṇam ( Śaṭhakōpa ), Sēnēṣam (Viṣvaksēna) Śriyam (Lakṣmi), and Indirā Sahacaram Nārāyaṇam (Nārāyaṇa).

It will be seen from the above slokas that the first three in the traditional list are Nārāyaṇa, Śrī or Lakshmi, and Seneśa or Viṣvaksēna and that the first of the Ācāryas, Nāthamuni who lived and moved in this world is connected to this line through Nammālvar. It will be under-rating the significance of this Parampara if we stated merely that the first three have been mentioned only to establish a hoary antiquity and a continuous line of Ācāryic succession from Śrīman Nārāyaṇa Himself. On the other hand, it represents the order of succession of persons who have, according to tradition, made definite contributions to the origin and development of Vaiṣṇava philosophy and religion. Thus, Śrīman Nārāyaṇa is described in the role of a spiritual preceptor in the "Nara-Nārāyaṇa episode, of the Mahābhāratha expounding to Nara the Sastras in general and the Aṣṭākṣara mantra in Particular - the basic mantra in Vaiṣṇava forms of worship and meditation. Besides, in the Nārāyaṇīya section of the Mahābhāratha, he is said to have expounded the Pāñcarātra, embodying the tenets of the Bhāgavata cult, from which the vital doctrines of

Vaiṣṇavism are known to have been derived. It may be noted too that the Gīta, also attributed to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, has been accepted as a Pāñcarātra text.

The place of Śrī or Lakṣmi in the Guruparamparā and Her role as Ācārya is revealed in the Sri Praśna Saṁhitā, one of the few better known Pāñcarātra texts which says that the Pāñcarātra āgama was transmitted to Viṣvaksēna next in the line only through Her. Besides, as the Consort of Viṣṇu, She plays a vital role as the Puruṣakāri, the interceder on behalf of erring souls before the Supreme God. In fact, the role of the Ācārya is a vital tenet of Vaiṣṇavism.

As said before, Viṣvaksēna received instruction in the Pāñcarātra from Nārāyaṇa through Lakṣmi and he in his turn passed it on to Saṭhakopa. He is supposed to be instrumental in carrying out the behests of the Lord and Lakṣmi in their spiritual role as Ācāryās. He may, in this sense, be said to represent the doctrine of dedication to the Ācārya (Ācārya-Niṣṭhā).

Saṭhakopa is the only one among the Ālvārs who finds a place in the Guruparamparā. This may be explained on the basis of the traditional belief that he was the Avayavi or the embodiment and that the other Ālvārs were his avayavas or limbs and that therefore he may be said to represent all of them as Ācāryas in his own person<sup>4</sup>. However, that may be, it is easy to

4. Bhūtam Siro Hrdamahahvayamakṣi Yugmam,  
Bhattaryamāsyam, Atha Bhargavaśya Kantham/  
Bāhū vadanti Kulasekhara Yogivāhan, Dormadhyānabhi  
Charanan Saṭhareh//

-quoted in the Ar. Guruparampara.



understand the significant place he holds in the line of succession. For, of all the hymns of the Ālvārs, it is his Tiruvāymoḻi that presents the doctrine of Prapatti or absolute surrender to God as the means of salvation. It is easy to see the undercurrent of a unified and systematic theme of Bhakti and Prapatti running through this great work. These doctrines, being vital parts of the Vaiṣṇava philosophy, it was no wonder that Saṭhakopa was included in the list of Ācāryas. The Ārayirappaḍi Guruparamparā states that he was born into this world at the behest of the Lord as the Amśa of Viśvaksēna and that he received the Pāñcarātra tradition from him.

The foregoing account of the Guruparamparā from Śrīman Nārāyaṇa to Nammālvār will reveal the significant fact<sup>e</sup> that according to tradition, Nāthamuni was the inheritor of the vital texts of Vaiṣṇavism like the Pāñcarātra and of its important doctrines of Devotion (Bhakti) and surrender to God (Papatti) through the Divya Prabandhams of the Ālvārs.

The stage is now set for the work of incorporation of these texts and doctrines into a unified formulation of the religion and philosophy of Vaiṣṇavism. We now pass on to the next stage described above as the "formative stage" of Vaiṣṇavism in South Indian History.

*Ācāryās – Nāthamuni to Ālavandār.*

The Ācāryās from Nāthamuni to Rāmanuja<sup>5</sup> come well within historic times and we have comparatively more detailed, though by no means full or strictly historical accounts of their lives in the traditional hagiological works, like the Ārayirappaḍi the Divya Sūri Caritam and Parpannāmṛtam.

*The traditional account of Nāthamuni's life. – Cir. 824-924 A. D.*

Nathamuni or Raṅganāthamuni, son of Īśwara Bhaṭṭa was a native of Vīrnārāyaṇapuram, situated in the dominions of the Chōla rulers of the day<sup>6</sup>.

Accompanied by his son, Iswara Mnui and his daughter-in-law, he went on a pilgrimage to the holy places in the North in the course of which he happened to stay and worship at Govardhanapura on the banks of the Jumna<sup>7</sup> for a time and then returned to Viranara-

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5. Das Gupta uses the word (Aragiyas) to denote these Ācāryās. It is not possible to ascertain either the source or the meaning of this term to denote the Ācāryās. – History of Indian Philosophy – Vol. III – Chap. XVIII – p. 94.

6. It is said that the ancestors of Nāthamuni may have been Bhāgavatas who, in the early centuries of the Christian era had migrated from the North and settled down in the Southern country.

7. It was in commemoration of his pilgrimage that his grandson was named Yamuna.

yanapuram. Then occurred the most important event in his life namely, his quest for and the discovery of the four thousand sacred hymns of the Ālvārs by Yogic contact with Sāṭhakopa. The circumstances leading to the discovery have been detailed elsewhere and need not be repeated here. The main interest, from the point of view of chronology in the above narrative, is that Nāthamuni was able to secure the Divya Prabandhams from Sathakopa not by direct contact with him but by Yoga Sakṣātkara, i.e., by the saint appearing before him as a result of his Yoga. It is obviously an attempt to bridge the long interval of time which is supposed to have elapsed between the age of the Ālvār and the Ācārya.

The other point of interest in the story which has so far been missed is the import of the specific statement that along with the Divya Prabandhams, the three rahasyas (Rahasya Trayam), the meaning of all the Darsanas (Akhila Darsana tatparyangal) and the secret of Aṣṭāṅgayoga (Aṣṭangayoga Rahasyam) were imparted to Nāthamuni by Sathakopa<sup>8</sup>. The suggestion is clear that Nāthamuni thereby became the repository of the full knowledge of the true Viśiṣṭādvaita tradition and was connected to Sāṭhakopa in the regular line of succession of Acāryas beginning from Śrīman Nārāyaṇa.

The traditional story regarding the type of music to which the hymns of the Alvars were set by Nathamuni also deserves notice. The story goes that the Cola king of the day heard a dancing girl sing in the Devagāna or

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8. Ār. Guruparamparā Prabhavam Ed. by S. Krishnamachari, Prabhava Karthikai p. 78.

celestial tune set for them by Nāthamūni and failed to appreciate it. Thereupon, she sang the hymns before the God of that place and won the appreciation of Nāthamuni who heard her sing in the shrine. On coming to know of this, the king went to the shrine and meeting Nāthamuni there asked to know the reason for his appreciation of the unfamiliar tune. Nāthamuni gave such convincing demonstration of his powers of discerning even the subtlest notes in music that the king felt satisfied about the superiority of the celestial tune to which the hymns of the Āḷvārs had been set by Nāthamuni.

The significance of this story lies in the fact that it reveals the underlying idea that the Divya Prabandhams were the Tamil Vedas and were therefore to be recited, like the Vedas, with all the subtle nuances of Udatṭa, Anudatta, etc., swaras. They have come to be regarded as one of the cardinal texts of Vaiṣṇavism as important as the Vēdas and the Pāñcarātra. By giving due recognition to the Divya Prabandhams, Nāthamuni had sown the seed for the unique system of Rāmānuja's philosophy as being based on Ubhaya Vēdānta or the two-fold sources namely, the Vēdas and the Upaniṣads on the one hand and the Āḷvārs works on the other.

There are no more striking particulars in the traditional accounts of his life except those relating to his end at Gaṅgaikōṇḍa Cōḷapuram. It is said that on one occasion, a party of hunters headed by the king hurried past his house at Vīranārāyaṇapuram disturbing him in his meditation, that, believing (doubtless under the influence of his deep meditation on Rama) that they must be no other than Rama and his followers, he

followed in vain their track in eager search to meet them till finally he was overcome by exhaustion and fell down dead at the palace gates of Gangaikonda Colapuram. The circumstances and the manner of his death would show the extreme devotion of Nāthamuni to Sri Rama and also to his deep Yogic-experience.

Tradition assigns an unusually long life of three hundred to five hundred years for Nāthamuni. As was observed already, this is a fanciful attempt to connect Nāthamuni with Nammalvar who is supposed to have lived centuries before him.

### THE AGE OF NĀTHAMUNI

This brings us to the problem of the date of Nāthamuni. The Anbil plates of Paranthaka II (Cir. 956-973 A.D.<sup>9</sup>) records the grant of land made by the king to his Minister, Aniruddha, a native of Anbil. The author of a sanskrit verse in the inscription refers to himself as Madhava Bhatta, son of Bhatta Datta, who, among other things, was 'a moon in the family of Parasara' and was a 'bee at the lotuṣ namely the feet of Srinatha'. If, as suggested by the late T. A. Gopinatha Rao<sup>10</sup>, 'Srinatha' in the above verse can be identified with Nāthamuni, his age could well be assigned to the latter half of the ninth and the beginning of the tenth centuries A. D.<sup>11</sup>

9. Ep. Indica Vol. XV – p 54.

10. T. A. Gopinatha Rao, The History of Sri Vaisnavas p. 30

11. On the basis of the Anbil plates showing 'the part played by Vaisnavism in the social and religious life

Another way of looking at the problem is by trying to trace Nāthamuni's date backwards from the accepted date for Rāmanuja (1017-1137). Allowing a reasonable average span of 30 years for each of the three generations of Acaryas between Nāthamuni and Rāmanuja (i. e., Puṇḍarikākṣa, Rāmamiśra, Yāmuna), we arrive at about 927 A. D. for the age of Nāthamuni. As the traditional date of Yāmuna's birth is said to be Cir. 918 A. D., we may take it that Cir. 927 A. D. falls in the closing years of his life. We may therefore, conclude that there is nothing improbable in the generally accepted date for Nāthamuni i. e., the latter half of the ninth and the beginning of the tenth century.

*Nāthamuni's works:*— Nāthamuni is said to have written two works, Nyāya Tattva and Yoga-Rahasya, both of which are not now extant. There are, however, references to the former in the works of Śrī Vēdānta Desika and Ramanuja's Śrī Bhāṣya, showing that it was "an authoritative work on Nyāya entirely in harmony with the Vedānta". Yāmuna's Ātmasiddhi is said to be based on Nyāyatattva. Besides these, a few invocatory verses in Tamil for the works of Śaṭhakopa, Viṣṇucitta, and Madhura Kavi are attributed to him.

of the time'. Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri appears to think that the probable age of Nāthamuni would be the end of the ninth and the beginning of the tenth century A. D - The Colas p. 638.

Prof. R. Ramanujacharya is inclined to think that 'Srinatha' may refer to the 'Lord of Lakshmi' rather than to Nāthamuni. -(Nāthamuni - His life and Times - Journal of the Annamalai University Vol. X p. 272.

*Estimate of Nāthamuni's work:—*

Nāthamuni came at a critical period in the history of the development of Hindu thought and found himself faced with the difficult task of freeing it from the shackles of Nāyavāda on the one hand and the baneful influences of heretical systems which rejected altogether the authority of the Vedas on the other. More positively, his task was one of synthesising "The Upaniṣadic view of Reality with the intensely religious conception of the world characteristic of the Bhakti cult". The result was a happy reconstruction of Vaiṣṇava philosophy and religion, which were henceforward to draw sustenance from two sources; namely, the Vēdas including the Upaniṣads and the Divya Prabandhams of the Āḷvārs. The Doctrine of the Prapatti (absolute surrender), fully reflected in the songs of the Āḷvārs constituted an important feature of the new system. The promise of the Prapatti Marga or the Path of Surrender as a means of salvation to all including women and the members of the lower castes together with the popularisation of the Tamil hymns contributed a great deal to the development of Vaiṣṇavism as a universal religion<sup>12</sup>.

Puṇḍarīkākṣa (Tamil-Uyyakkonḍār) and  
Rāma Misra (Tamil, Maṇakkāl Nambi)

The successors of Nāthamuni in the line of Ācāryas were Puṇḍarīkākṣa and Rāma Misra. The former, a Cōḷia Brahmin of Tiruvallarai near Srīraṅgam was the

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12. For a fuller estimate of Nāthamuni's work, see R. Ramanujachari - Nāthamuni, his life and times - Journal of Annamalai University Vol. IX pp. 268-271.

chief disciple of Nāthamuni and had been named by him as his spiritual successor. This is revealed in the traditional story of the disciple escorting, at the behest of his master, his (the Guru's) wife to her father's residence, where he was subjected to indignity as a person of inferior sect by being served stale-food. He accepted it without protest showing thereby his utter self-abnegation and indifference to honour. It is said that Nāthamuni was struck by his humility, a mark of high spiritual advancement and so named him "Uyyakoṇḍār" or Saviour (meaning Saviour of the new dispensation). This, indeed is supposed to be the spiritual lesson of Puṇḍarīkākṣa's life.

Nathamuni had entrusted the spiritual guardianship of his grand-son, Yāmuna to Puṇḍarīkākṣa, who in his turn passed it on to his own disciple, Rāma Miśra. Rāma Miśra thus came next in spiritual succession to Puṇḍarīkākṣa and thus became the preceptor of Yāmuna. <sup>13</sup>.

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13. Saugandhakulya, mentioned by Das Gupta as the birth place of Rāma Miśra is evidently the literal sanskritisation of the Tamil place name "Manakkal" (Manam : Saugandha-kal : Kulya). He mentions earlier his name as Manakkal Nambi'. Earlier, he states that Nāthamuni passed away at Ganga, evidently the sanskrit translation of the Tamil Gangaikonda Cōlapuram the close similarity between this and the sanskritisation of names of persons and places in the Divya Sūri Caritam pointed elsewhere is not only interesting but also significant. Das Gupta - His. of Hindu Phy. Vol. III. Ch. XVIII p. 96-97.



**YĀMUNĀCHĀRYA (Tamil Ājavandār)**  
(Cir. 918-1038 A.D.)

We have a fairly full account of the life and works of Yāmūnācārya in the traditional Guruparamparās and other works based on them. He was born in Vīranārāyaṇapuram (Cir. 918 A.D.) and was early initiated by his father Īśvaramuni in the study of the Vēdas and other traditional Śāstras. The circumstances leading to his disputation with the Court poet of the Cōla king of the day and his victory in it make very interesting reading. Ākkiālvan the Court poet wanted to collect tribute from Mahā Bhāṣya Bhatta, the Guru of Yāmuna and when he (Yāmuna), on behalf of his Guru, refused the payment of the tribute, got infuriated and demanded submission of Yāmuna to him or a contest. Young Yāmuna accepted the challenge on his Guru's behalf and overcame his powerful adversary in the ensuing disputation which was conducted in the presence of the king and queen in the palace. The queen, who had been impressed by Yāmuna's personality, was so pleased with his victory that she hailed him as "Ājavandār", the Victor. Yāmuna himself, according to the king's wager in the contest got half the kingdom and began to lead a life of luxury and ease in the royal palace. This turn in the life of Yāmuna was a matter for great concern for Rāma Miśra who had been enjoined by his Guru to prepare Yāmuna for the spiritual mission. By a clever ruse<sup>14</sup>, he got access to Yāmuna in his palace

14. After regularly supplying a particular vegetable to the palace kitchen every day for Yāmuna's daily food, Rāma Miśra all of a sudden stopped the supply. Noticing the absence of that particular item in his daily menu,

and reminded him of the spiritual treasure which had been bequeathed to him by his grand-father, Nāthamuni and which he (Rāma Miśra) had been keeping in trust for him all along. Yāmuna's curiosity was roused and was one day induced to follow Rāma Miśra to Śrīraṅgam to get possession of the treasure there. Yāmuna's spiritual consciousness was awakened when Rāma Miśra took him to the shrine and pointing to the God there told him that that was the treasure bequeathed to him (Paitamaham Dhanam), was no other than Śrī Rāṅga-nātha. Yāmuna thereupon, was awakened to his destined role, took up Sanyāsa and devoted the rest of his life for the propagation of Viśiṣṭādvaita. Rāma Miśra had accomplished his task by reclaiming Yāmuna to the spiritual mission which had been long ago determined for him by Nāthamuni.

*Yāmuna's works :-* If Nāthamuni had by his works provided a plan for the formulation of Viśiṣṭādvaita, Yāmuna was to lay its foundations secure for its later systematisation by Rāmānuja.<sup>15</sup> This will be clear from

Yāmuna asked for the reason and was told that the gentleman who had been supplying it regularly had stopped doing so suddenly. Yāmuna ordered that he should be brought to his presence when next he came to the palace with the supply. Accordingly, when Rāma Miśra again went to the palace, he was introduced to Yāmuna. Thus did Rāma Miśra gained access to Yāmuna.

15. Refer Tattva Mukta-Kalāpa, Adravyasara St. 136, quoted by R. Ramanujachari in his article on Nathamuni and his times-Journal of the Annamalai University Vol. IX, page 271.

a careful analysis of Yāmuna's works, most of which luckily are now extant and have been commented upon by celebrated Ācāryas like Veṅkaṭanātha. They are (1) the Siddhitraya, (2) Āgamaprāmāṇya, (3) Gītārtha Saṅgraha, (4) Mahāpuruṣa Nirṇaya, (5) Stotra Ratna (6) Catuṣloki.<sup>16</sup> A brief review of these works will reveal the wide range of subjects dealt with.

*Siddhitraya*: —.<sup>17</sup> This work in three sections, Ātmasiddhi, Īswara Siddhi, and Samvit Siddhi, seeks to establish the reality of the individual and the Paramātmā (Supreme) soul and refutes the doctrine of Avidya of Advaita. It is often quoted by Rāmānuja in his *Śrī Bhāṣya* for the purpose of refuting the position of Śrī Śaṅkara. In fact, it contains all the main arguments advanced by the different schools of thought in regard to the nature of the soul, Īswara, and consciousness.

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16. See the sloka containing the names of these works in the introduction to the *Gītārthasaṅgraha Rakṣa* by Veṅkaṭanātha.

17. The following editions of *Siddhitraya* may be consulted. (i) By R. Ramanujachari and K. Srinivasa-charya, Annamalai University Philsophy series 4. (ii) Edition in Sanskrit by P. B. Annangaracharya Siromani, Wadral, Nirnayasagar Press, Bombay. (iii) Edition in Tamil by Uttamur Viraraghavacharya. The Samvit Siddhi is stated to have been the first of the three Siddhis though it is usually put as the third. It is also incomplete, presumably because the final portions of it have been lost

*Āgamaprāmaṇya* :— In this work, Yāmuna seeks to establish the authority of the Pāñcarātra Śāstra. He also establishes its orthodoxy by pointing out that its tenets are not contradictory but are fully reconcilable to the Vēdānta. It is on the basis of this work that Rāmānuja maintains that the ‘Utpatyasambhavādhikaranam’ reflects the authority of the Pāñcarātra.

*Gītārtha Saṅgraha*:— is a summary of the teachings of the Gītā in 30 verses presenting the arguments in that work according to the Viśiṣṭādvaita school. Rāmānuja’s commentary on the Gītā follows the lines set by Yāmuna in his work<sup>18</sup>.

*Stotraratna*:— containing 75 slokas expressing Yāmuna’s deep devotion to the lord is indeed the gem of that class of devotional literature. Subsequent stotras including those of Kūrattālvān and Parāśara Bhaṭṭa have followed the model set by Yāmuna in this respect. Together with the Catuśloki, it is said to have inspired the soul-stirring Gadya Traya of Rāmānuja. The sentiments expressed in the stotra would reveal that it is a document of Prapatti and not merely one of prayer<sup>19</sup>.

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18. See A recent study by D. T. Tatacharya on the subject in the Journal of the Sri Venkateswara Oriental Institute. Also the thesis on Ramanuja’s Gita Bhāṣya by Dr. J. Buitenan with text and translation of the Gītārtha Saṅgraha.

19. Mss. on the development of Viśiṣṭādvaita by Dr. K. C. Varadachari. He thinks that it is for this reason that this and the other Stotras are considered to be hand-books of the Philosophy of Religion of Viśiṣṭādvaita.

*Catuṣloki*:— is a stotra of four verses on Śrī or Lakṣmi. The four verses bring out the essence of the Sri Tatva, the Supreme Motherhood of God. 'God and Mother form a divine pair. Sri is Grace ... inseperable from Hari in all possessions, powers and purposes'<sup>20</sup>

*Mahāpuruṣa Nirnaya*:— is unfortunately not now extant. It is just possible that it was a sort of sequel to his Āgamaprāmāṇya. Having established the authority and orthodoxy of the Pāñcarātra, Yāmuna should have thought it necessary to establish the Mahāpuruṣa, Supreme person or being who had to be worshipped according to the Śāstra.

Yāmuna's works noted above seen to reveal a purpose namely, the supplementing of the works of his grand-father, Nāthamuni for a fuller formulation of the Viśiṣṭādvaita system. That being so, it is natural to expect that he should have contributed to the literature on Yōga also. But tradition is silent on this, and the fact that Veṅkaṭanātha does not mention any such work of Yāmuna in the śloka referring to his works in his introduction to the Pāñcarātra Saṅgraha Rakṣā should show clearly that there is no work by him on Yōga.

There is an interesting and also a revealing episode on Yāmuna's life relating to this subject. Tradition records that after Yāmuna had settled down in Śrīraṅgam as Ācārya, Rāma Miśra told him that there was yet another 'Rahasya which he (Yāmuna) had to

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20. Ibid. The author is of the opinion that it is the importance, of Sri in the system that has led to its being called by

learn from Kurukkaikkavalappan, the disciple of Nāthamuni. Rāma Miśra recalled to Yāmuna how his grand-father, Nāthamuni had tried to initiate his disciple Puṇḍarīkākṣa into the Yōga, and how he could not do it as the disciple felt that the initiation had to be done towards the close of his life. It is obvious therefore, that Nāthamuni could not initiate Puṇḍarīkākṣa in Yōga in his own life time and that therefore, there was a break in the Yōga tradition. On hearing this, Yāmuna felt a desire to learn the secret of Yōga, having had the other essential discipline from Rāma Miśra, already. He went to Kurukaikkavalappan, who happened to be the only disciple of Nāthamuni and custodian of the Yōga Rahasya, yet living the latter fixed a particular future date, namely, the day on which he was shed his mortal life and directed him to go to him again before that date for the purpose of initiation. The story goes that during the subsequent pilgrimage of Yāmuna to the holy places in the South, when he was staying in Tiruvanantapuram, he remembered the date fixed for his Yōga initiation and found to his great regret that that happened to be the very day fixed for the purpose. He had, therefore, to forego the great initiation.

It is easy to arrive at the facile conclusion that the Yōga tradition had been lost even in the days of Yāmuna and that ever since it has had no place in the theory and practice of Vaiṣṇavism. But, can this be true? Is it possible that this Yoga Rahasya that had been imparted by Nammālvār to Nāthamuni along with the knowledge of the Darśanas and Divya Prabandhams would have been allowed to die out so unceremoniously?

The answer lies in the proper interpretation of the Kurukkaikkavalappan episode in Ālavandar's life against the background of the development of the trends of Vaiṣṇava thought since the days of Nāthamuni. The new trend initiated by Nāthamuni was the popularisation of the Divya Prabandhams and the doctrines of Bhakti and Prapatti emphasised by them. They were no doubt implicit in the Pāñcarātra and in the Bhāgavata religion the spirit of which only is revealed in the hymns of the Āḷvars. But, what Nāthamuni attempted anew was to popularise these doctrines and hold out the promise of salvation even for the commonfolk (not initiated in Yogic methods) through Bhakti and Prapatti mārgas. And it may be noted too, that this was attempted to be done through the popularisation of the Divya Prabandhas which uttered the language of the people and spoke to their heart. This being the new trend of Vaiṣṇava teaching, more and more emphasis was laid on these by succeeding Acaryas and less and less on the path of Yoga which was only for the select few trained to pursue it for Mokṣa.

It may be that Yoga, difficult as it was also considered likely, as the ritualistic Mīmāṃsā in an earlier phase of Hindu thought and practice, to mislead its votaries into forgetting God (the end) in the exaltation of the Ego. Nevertheless, it would be wrong to assert that Yoga had been altogether given up or discarded in the Viśiṣṭādvaita system. As long as the Pāñcarātra continues to be regarded as the cardinal text of Vaiṣṇavism, so long should Yōga be deemed to be one of its vital disciplines. For, one of the daily duties prescribed by it for every Sri Vaiṣṇava described as a 'Pāñcakāla-

Pārāyaṇa' and included as part and parcel of Bhakti<sup>21</sup>, is Yōga in the sense of Aṣṭāṅga Yōga. That it is so even to-day is shown, among other things, by the insistence on 'Bhūta-Suddhi' (purification of the Prakṛti or the elements composing the body) of the worshipper as a kind of Yōga for the performance of the daily Ārādhana (worship) of God by every Sri Vaiṣṇava. It will be a misreading of Vaiṣṇavism to think that it has no place for Yōga in its system.

What has been considered lost is just what probably has been deliberately discarded namely, the kind of Yōga (for eg. Haṭha Yōga) which is intended for conquests, however exalted they may be rather than for salvation of one's self. It is also possible to construe that the more acceptable aspects of Yōga have been deliberately veiled as being impossible for the understanding of the commonfolk.

In a sense, Yāmuna's great contribution to Viśiṣṭādvaita, perhaps next only to his works, must be said to his discovery of Rāmānuja for the Ācāryaship next to him. The Guruparamparā accounts of his quest for a proper successor to him vividly describe his anxious concern in the matter despite the fact that he had already several ardent disciples under him in Śrīraṅgam.

Having heard about Rāmānuja's proficiency in Śāstras, when he was yet a pupil of Yādavaprakaśa, Yāmuna visited Kāñcīpuram to acquaint himself with

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21. See Aspects of Bhakti, Mysore University Lectures by Dr. K. C. Varadachari.



the young scholar. Seeing him from a distance, he was struck by his personality so much that he declared in the presence of his followers that he (Rāmānuja) was verily the future Ācarya. He had by that time come to know about Rāmānuja's proficiency in Śāstras and his penchant for the correct interpretation of the Vedic texts. He rightly allowed him time to grow into maturity under the gentle influence of Tirukkacci Nambi and the benign grace of Lord Varadarāja at Conjeevaram.

Subsequently, on hearing that Rāmānuja had left the tutelage of Yādavaprakāśa and was engaged in the service of the Lord Varadarāja, Yāmuna sent mahapurṇa (Periya Nambi) to go and fetch Rāmānuja from Conjeevaram. While on his mission, Periya Nambi one day was going round the temple reciting the Stotra Ratna of Yāmuna, on hearing which Rāmānuja stopped to enquire who the author of verse was. Being told that it was Yāmuna, he expressed at once a desire to meet him and obtain his grace. Periya Nambi was only too happy to take him along with him to Śrīraṅgam. But while they were nearing Śrīraṅgam, they saw at a distance on the banks of the Cauvery a huge concourse of man and soon learnt that they had gathered there for the last rites of Yāmuna who had since passed away.

Here comes the significant story of how Rāmānuja saw and was curious to know the reason why three fingers in the hands of Yāmuna remained closed. True to his guest, he was told that Yāmuna had expressed during his life a strong desire for three things, which he had considered very important. 1. The perpetuation of the memory of Vyāsa and Parāśara. 2. The

fostering of the loving memory of Nammalvar. 3. Writing a Bhāṣya or commentary on the Vedānta Sūtra. Thereupon, Rāmānuja declared in the presence of the gathering that, given the grace of Yāmuna he would fulfil every one of those wishes of the departed Ācārya. At once, the closed fingers straightened up as if to indicate his pleasure at the ready response of Rāmānuja to accomplish the three-fold task that he had in mind.

It is well known that Rāmānuja wrote the Śrī Bhāṣya and directed Tirukkurukaippiran Pillan to write the first commentary in Maṇipravālam on the Tiruvaymoli of Nammalvar (the Arayirapadi)<sup>22</sup> and thereby fulfilled the second and third tasks set for him by Yāmuna. Regarding the first, namely, the perpetuation of the memory of Vyāsa and Parāśara, tradition would say that he accomplished it by naming his intimate associate and disciple Kūrattālvān's son as 'Parāśara Bhatta' after the great Parasara. This seems to be a rather unconvincing way of interpreting the performance of a noble task. Consistently with the manner in which he had fulfilled the other two tasks, it would be more convincing and appropriate to hold that Rāmānuja perpetuated the memory of Parāśara for all time by writing a commentary on the Gītā which is said to be a substantial summary of Parāśara's Viṣṇupurāṇa, having done the same for Vyāsa by writing the Śrī Bhāṣya the great commentary on his Sūtras.

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22. Later commentaries on the Tiruvaymoli by other Ācāryas followed this.

*Yāmuna's date:*— Apart from the traditional date given (918–1028 A.D.), there is no other evidence for fixing the date precisely for Yāmuna. However, a few facts which may indicate broadly his date have been given.<sup>23</sup> In his *Sidhitraya*, Yāmuna refers to a Cola King of his time (Yadha Chola Nṛpaḥ, etc.) though the king is not mentioned by name it is inferred by the manner of his reference to him as 'Sāmṛāt', that he may be identified Raja Raja the Great (985–1014) one of the powerful rulers of the Cola line. The second broad indication is his reference in the *Ātmasiddhi* to 'Suresamvacas' which apparently relates to Sureswaracarya the pupil of Śrī Saṅkara, and it is possible to infer from this that Yāmuna was well acquainted with his commentary on Saṅkara Bhāṣya.

Yāmuna's contribution may be summed up by saying that 'he was the initiator of the philosophical dialectic in Viśiṣṭādvaita'<sup>24</sup> If Rāmānuja could compose regular and comprehensive texts on the three 'Prasthanas', namely, the Upaniṣads, the Gītā and the Vedānta Sūtras, it was mainly because of the earlier works of Yāmuna. It would be appropriate therefore to reiterate that Yāmuna's contribution to Viśiṣṭādvaita consisted in laying its foundation on the plans already formulated by Nāthamuni, for its systematisation by Rāmānuja.

23. Vaisnavite reformers by T. Rajagopalacharya P. 29.

24. Dr. K. C. Varadachari - Lectures on Development of Viśiṣṭādvaita.

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